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The Nation.

March 24, 1984 $1.25; U.K. 65p

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EDITORIAL

TRAPPED IN A MEDIA WARP

In the old days, the mass media merely affected politics, and politics simply informed the media. There was a logical distance between the two. Now it's a cliché of communications theory that the relationship has been growing closer by the quadrennium. But no one prepared us for the extraordinary conflation this year: the media and politics are looped in a closed system.

Like the Escher hand that draws itself, the system is self-constructing, self-defining, self-perpetuating. Thus, media consultant Pat Cadell invents a Gary Hart image, the mass media inflates it, predicts Hart's progress, certifies his success—and then tries to destroy him precisely because he is a media creation. The media disinvents Walter Mondale one week and resurrects him the next—on no basis beyond his media performance. Candidates enter the race to get visibility, and they drop out when the media decides they have lost their appeal.

The media conducts popularity polls to preempt outside influences, and then stages exit polls to cue voters in other time zones into fulfilling its own prophecies. It defines the issues ("character," "special interests"), thus determining each candidate's political behavior. Politicians play along because they see no other game in town, and once in, there is no escape. The fugue begins with the notes of its own ending.

What really happened on—another media creation—"Super Tuesday"? That is to say, is there anyplace outside of the system where one can see with certainty what consequences may evolve within? Probably not, because this process of evolution does not follow natural political law. The selection is unnatural; it is skewed by the demands of the "election industry" for melodrama, charisma, ratings and revenues. Stop the Möbius strip! We want to get off.

MEESE AND 'DEBATEGATE'
Christopher Hitchens

HOUNDING DENNIS BANKS
Constance Matthiessen

MARCOS ON THE ROCKS
Peter Tarr

'SILKWOOD' AT M.I.T.
Joseph R. Egan
David F. Noble

BOURGEOISIE IN BED
Elaine Showalter

RUSSIAN POETS
Paul Schmidt

IS MUCKRAKING PASSÉ?

THE NEW COUNTER-JOURNALISM

ALAN WOLFE

In their book *The Confidence Gap*, an attempt to discover if Americans have lost faith in their institutions, Seymour Martin Lipset of Stanford University and William Schneider of the American Enterprise Institute concluded that Americans are not as hostile to business as are the citizens of many countries. They make a conspicuous exception, though, for the oil industry. Americans think that the oil companies make too much money, cannot be trusted, are unethical and spoil the environment. Moreover, hostility toward the oil companies increased dramatically in the decade after the energy crisis. The public had spoken. In spite of their general antipathy toward government regulation, Americans said unambiguously that they wanted that industry controlled. Yet since 1973 the oil companies have achieved a degree of power and independence from government unprecedented in their history. Is there a story there?

Robert Sherrill thought so. Digging through innumerable Congressional transcripts, industry journals and regulatory and judicial records, Sherrill figured out how the companies were able to transcend their negative public image and get what they wanted: they bought everyone in sight. Sherrill's book, *The Oil Follies of 1970–1980*, belongs to a great tradition in American journalism which details the corruption of the public interest by private greed. Yet his investigations took place in a vacuum of journalistic concern. True, corporations' wholesale purchase of government against the express will of the public is an old story; it is no longer "news." But much of what appears on television

(*Continued on Page 351*)

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LETTERS.

KISSINGER EXPOSED

Kinnelon, N.J.
Christopher Hitchens's February 25 "Minority Report" is a most important piece, not merely because it exposes Kissinger as a Machiavellian, manipulative, self-aggrandizing oligarch but because it reinforces a quintessential reality: such men exist and thrive only because some of the rest of us are cursed with monumental gullibility.

Of course, David Levine's accompanying drawing says it all. Bravo, *Nation*!

David Mann

LEVINE 'WONDERFUL'

New York City
David Levine's drawing of Kissinger in Central America has the truth and power of a great Daumier. Levine's work is *wonderful.*

Edgar Stillman

LEVINE 'TASTELESS'

Concord, N.H.
David Levine's caricature of Henry Kissinger is supremely offensive and tasteless. I had always believed that a "serious" journal of opinion like *The Nation* could effectively convey its arguments without resorting to that kind of nonsense. *Michael Birkner*
Concord Monitor

THAT OLD MALE FEELING

New York City
As workers at *The Nation*, we protest the publication of David Levine's cartoon in the February 25 issue. The problem is not that the drawing is sexually frank; it is that a progressive magazine has no business using rape jokes and sexist imagery (he screws, she is screwed) to make the point that Kissinger revels in his international dominance. Kissinger is a man, but the globe is not a woman. The artist's intention may have been to dramatize the confusion between sex and power in the mind of a powerful white, middle-aged man. But the publication of his drawing shows that *The Nation* itself is imbued with that mentality. No wonder seven out of ten of our subscribers are men.

David Acker, Claudine Bacher
David Bank, Anthony Borden
Phyllis L. Burns, Ann B. Epstein
Karen FitzGerald, John Holtz
L.A. Kauffman, Cookee V. Klein
Andrew Kopkind, Douglas Lavin
Laurie Lipper, Greta Loell
Judith Long, Ola Lyon
Maria Margaronis, George Monaco
Jane Oski, Katha Pollitt
Mark A. Rausher, Jane W. Sharples
Micah Sifry, Shirley Sulat
Art Winslow, JoAnn Wypijewski

USING STEREOTYPES

Washington
How depressing that so many *Nation* colleagues should confuse the *use* of a stereotype, even as an artistic satire, with the *reinforcement* of a stereotype. The only safeguard against such a literal mentality would be the adoption of the Islamic Code which, in order to be on the safe side, forbids all depictions of the human body as profane.

The last sentence of their letter is just silly.

Christopher Hitchens

WOMAN'S PLACE AT 'THE NATION'

New York City
Although I find David Levine's cartoon offensive, I cannot agree with my colleagues that it represents *The Nation*'s views toward women. *The Nation* has consistently and actively sought to publish works of excellence written by women and sensitive to women's issues. In fact, the magazine has led other publications in doing so. *Grace Schulman*

LEVINE'S EXPLOITING VISION

Albuquerque, N.M.
Although I suspect that you would prefer not to receive a humorless feminist letter, I feel compelled to comment on David Levine's drawing. Here we have the image of Henry Kissinger in bed, his backside covered by the American flag, hovering happily atop a female body with the globe for her head. The Western Hemisphere faces us; "she" clutches the sheet beneath her. In short, we see Kissinger fucking the world.

What's wrong with this picture? Only its misogyny: the direct and "natural" equation of women with the earth and the assumption that the portrayal of sexual intercourse will be automatically interpreted as an image of exploitation and oppression. Levine's illustration makes its point only because it exploits the vision of a dominated female sexuality. *Debra C. Rosenthal*

ART AND REALITY

Brooklyn
I think David Levine's drawing may well be the finest political cartoon of our time. *The Nation*'s decision to publish it was wise and courageous and has my complete support. Art is not a literal transcription of reality. The cartoon is not sexist. It is Kissinger in all his malevolence. *Walter Rosenblum*
Professor of Art, Brooklyn College

THE CONVERSE IMAGE

Washington
David Levine's cartoon is insensitive to women and irresponsible, qualities readers do not expect to find in *The Nation*. Although the rape metaphor is common, *The Nation* could take the lead as a progressive journal by recognizing the trauma of rape. In reality, one out of four women will be sexually assaulted; the cartoon strikes at women's genuine fears.

The Nation is also perpetuating a view of women as victims. Is it O.K. to depict women's bodies in this manner because we are often powerless and exploited? Perhaps it never crossed Levine's mind to have Kissinger sodomizing a man or raping a child. Those are unacceptable and threatening images. Why not simply have Kissinger raping the globe? Why use the woman's body?

Not knowing the fear of rape experienced by women, men often fail to understand why women find rape metaphors so threatening. Consider how men might feel were a cartoon symbolizing Anne Burford's destruction of the environment depicted in the following way: A man's body with the globe as his head. Burford, overpowering in her size, steers scissors toward his testicles. The globe is symbolic of the world and the environment; the testicles represent the ability to reproduce and refurbish life; the scissors depict the serious threat to the environment posed by Burford's policies. That analogy is not completely comparable, for women have never had this power over men, but the threat posed to men in such a cartoon is clear. Would you expect the men who subscribe to withstand this treatment or would you find more creative, sensitive imagery to convey the message? Please show the same respect to women who read *The Nation.*

Louise Melling

REPLY

After members of the staff raised some serious questions about our use of David Levine's powerful caricature of Henry Kissinger, we had two meetings to discuss the semiotics of Levine's Kissinger in particular and the relationship of art to political commentary in general. At the end of the second one, a lively discussion which ranged over the use of stereotypes in cartooning (doesn't some stereotyping reinforce the racist and sexist images that we should be fighting against?), whether it's desirable to "edit" art (why couldn't Kissinger be doing it to a sheep, for instance?), questions of interpretation (do we have here a seduction, a rape or simply consenting adults, and from whose perspective?), etc., Levine, who was present, commented that he was grateful for the seminar since it was the first truly substantive discussion of his work he had experienced in more than twenty years as a political cartoonist. One result of it, he said, was to make him more aware of the consequences of his métier. He added, however, that if he had it to do over again, he wouldn't change a line. I feel the same way. *Victor Navasky*

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EDITORIALS.

The End of END?

Americans who get their foreign news from the networks and the big-city press may be surprised to learn that the European peace and antinuclear movement is a powerful and permanent presence in Continental politics. Much of the media popped peace activism into the nearest memory hole after the first cruise and Pershing 2 missiles successfully reached European soil last fall. Those few reporters who keep the issue alive do so primarily to bury the movement whenever possible. In a virtuoso performance of snide polemics, *The New York Times*'s man in Bonn, James M. Markham, painted as grim a picture of the "antimissile movement" as any NATO general could want. His images were stark and dismal: the peace coalition has "retreated"; it is "divided" and "uncertain," its members "disillusioned" and "lamenting" an "incredible weakening" of support. "Forlorn figures" have replaced the protesting masses of October, and as proof of the utter deterioration of a once-proud movement, the "doughty remnant" that survives even includes one "shaven Buddhist monk."

The truth is that the European peace movement, of which the German contingent is but a part, has drastically altered the political map. The campaign to protest the missiles did not stop their deployment, but it built an antimilitarist base that may amount to a popular majority in many Western European countries. It has also had a profound impact on Eastern bloc countries. In East Germany an important inde-

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pendent peace movement competes with the official government group, and challenges both Soviet and U.S. nuclear policies.

The complex relationship between the peoples and governments of the two Germanys makes politics of any kind problematic across the East-West divide, and peace politics is particularly confused at the moment. Conservative West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl is cozying up to the Communist East German leader, Erich Honecker, and that entente has made life difficult for peace protesters in both camps. But antiwar sentiment is as high or higher than ever, and it is not likely to diminish because street demonstrations are out of season. Those on both sides of the border know that holocaust is only three minutes away and survival depends on protest, not resignation.

Elsewhere in Western Europe the movement continues to grow. The British haven't been deterred by cruise deployment, and activists in the Netherlands are preparing for a parliamentary vote on the new missiles in May or June. At present, fewer than ten votes separate the pros and the cons, and the campaign to swing them will mount in the coming weeks. The media might be surprised to see the movement pop up again with the late tulips.

Namibian Stall

First the good news: South Africa and Angola have agreed to a cease-fire along the war-scarred border between Angola and occupied Namibia. Better still, South Africa is relinquishing a sizable stretch of southern Angola, which it seized in 1981, and is withdrawing its forces to northern Namibia. Best of all, says top State Department Africanist Chester Crocker, who mediated the cease-fire, it will enable Angola to send home the Cubans called in to help defend the country against South African aggression.

Crocker contends that once the Cubans are gone, Pretoria will grant Namibia independence, and Prime Minister P.W. Botha and Co. will devote themselves to dismantling apartheid. It looks great on paper: Namibia gets independence, Angola gets peace and U.S. recognition, South Africa gets a political pat on the back for making peace, and the Reagan Administration gets its first foreign policy success.

Now the bad news: it won't work. The Crocker scenario rests on several false assumptions about South African intentions. Foremost of those is that Pretoria will allow U.N.-supervised elections in its vast, arid neighboring colony. It will not. Even South African military intelligence officials concede that such a vote would result in a sweeping victory for the candidates of the South-West Africa People's Organization (Swapo). Pretoria views the guerrilla group as a Soviet surrogate, and having lost billions of dollars and hundreds of soldiers in its eighteen-year war against Swapo, it has no reason to alter that view. Indeed, according to the latest issue of *Africa Report*, a survey of Cabinet ministers and key members of Parliament who belong to South Africa's ruling National Party found that 82.3 percent think that South Africa should not negotiate with Swapo.

The recent formation of a second anti-Swapo coalition of Namibian tribal parties gives Pretoria added incentive to stall, since even sympathizers say this South Africa-backed group will need time to build a constituency. The absence of any credible political opposition to Swapo means that elections at this time would result in a sharp trouncing of South Africa's allies, sending a message to other African leaders that collaboration with Pretoria is political suicide.

Another assumption underlying the Administration's settlement plan is that South Africans, their economy in the third consecutive year of recession, are tired of footing the $1 billion annual bill for occupying Namibia. But gold prices are on the upswing, and Western demand for South African minerals is increasing as the global recession ends. There is no reason to think Pretoria has decided that the costs outweigh the benefits.

The primary benefit is strategic. By occupying Namibia and most of southern Angola, the South African Defense Force (S.A.D.F.) has been able to shift the front line of the war against African National Congress guerrillas hundreds of miles from South African soil. And Namibia also serves as a staging area for S.A.D.F. strikes against Angola—the only southern African country to offer military aid to the A.N.C. and Swapo—as well as a base of support for South Africa's client, Jonas Savimbi, whose guerrilla forces have become a serious threat to Angola's government.

"Those in a position to shape the practical outcome in Namibia, the military men, would appear to favor the view that the Republic can best be defended from forward positions," wrote Kenneth Grundy, a professor of political science at Case Western Reserve, in a 1983 study of the South African security establishment for the South African Institute for International Relations. "From this vantage point, the S.A.D.F. would seem to want to delay, as much as practical, a settlement that might lead to a Swapo government in Windhoek." On all policy decisions relating to Namibia, Grundy contends, the military has the last word. Earlier this month, Grundy told us that his previous assessment of S.A.D.F. thinking still holds. "They don't feel like they can defend South Africa at the borders of South Africa," he said.

Pretoria has sacrificed no military advantages by agreeing to a cease-fire and withdrawing from Angolan soil. It remains in firm possession of Namibia, maintains tens of thousands of troops along Angola's southern border and continues to aid Savimbi in his war against the socialist government in Luanda. For their part, the Angolans have halted the movement of Swapo guerrillas from Angola into Namibia—something Pretoria was never able to achieve on the battlefield. The accord has also enabled the South Africans to avoid a Namibian settlement that would put a Swapo government on their western border and thus demonstrate to South Africa's black majority that armed struggle works.

South Africa's recent call for an all-parties conference that would include the Angolan government, Savimbi's

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forces and the Namibian internal parties is an effort to bypass entirely the implementation of U.N.-supervised elections. It is unlikely that the Angolan government will drop its longstanding refusal to discuss the "internal" problem of Savimbi. And even U.S. State Department officials have pointedly refused to endorse the South African proposal. Privately, American officials fear that it could derail the present initiative.

As South Africa's largest trading partner, the United States has a hefty stick with which to prod the South Africans toward a settlement. Previous Administrations have preferred to carry the stick rather than use it, and Reagan has only compounded that failure by improving economic, diplomatic and political ties with Pretoria without extracting concessions.

The Crocker agreement will lead to another dead end along the tortuous road to Namibian independence and will produce another diplomatic disaster for the United States. But the real cost will be borne by the people of Namibia and Angola—they alone will pay in blood.

MICHAEL FLESHMAN AND JAMES CASON

Michael Fleshman and James Cason, formerly the editors of Southern Africa, *are freelance writers living in New York City.*

Hannah Weinstein

In its obituary, *The New York Times* called Hannah Weinstein, who died on March 9 at the age of 72, an activist, and I don't think the word has ever been used more aptly. Most of us, when we read or hear what's going on in the world, react with approval or disapproval or detachment, and go back to daily living. Hannah's reaction was more likely to be "What can I do about it?" and then "Who can help?" and "What approach will get the best results?" She responded to events by creating counter-events, and they were always bigger and broader than anybody thought they could be.

As a newspaper reporter and then a press agent, she did volunteer work for the political campaigns of Vito Marcantonio and Fiorello La Guardia, and got some organizing and fund-raising experience with Russian War Relief. But her amazing talents weren't tested until 1944, when she became, under her maiden name, Hannah Dorner, the executive director and single most important force in the Independent Citizens Committee of the Arts, Science and Professions (I.C.C.A.S.P.).

Bigger and broader. Madison Square Garden was the ideal size for her. In the five years that followed she organized rallies there for F.D.R.'s final campaign, for veterans' benefits, for international control of atomic energy, for Henry Wallace and the Progressive Party in 1948 and, climactically, for the Waldorf Peace Conference in 1949. Even after a lapse of twenty years, during which she pursued a career as a movie executive, Madison Square Garden was still her turf. She put together two meetings there for Eugene McCarthy in 1968, another for a group of antiwar senators in 1970 and still another in 1972 in the Felt Forum for the abolition of antiballistic missiles.

Thinking broad—politically broad—went along with thinking big. The New Deal coalition lived on in the I.C.C.A.S.P. for several years after Roosevelt's death and the start of the cold war. United in opposition to the foreign policy embraced by both major parties were Frank Sinatra, Harold Ickes, Jo Davidson, Harold Urey, Groucho Marx, Thomas Mann, Archibald MacLeish, Harlow Shapley, Paul Robeson, Gregory Peck, Dore Schary, Artie Shaw, Moss Hart, Lillian Hellman, Gene Kelly, J. Robert Oppenheimer, Linus Pauling, Orson Welles, Fredric March, John Hersey, Duke Ellington and Ronald Reagan. There had been some strains and defections by 1949, but Hannah still managed to make the Waldorf conference the broadest and most stimulating event of its kind ever held in this country.

She also organized support for those of us in the movie business who came to be known as the Hollywood Ten and whose case was in the courts at that time. After the cold war and McCarthyism destroyed the I.C.C.A.S.P., and the blacklisted people in Hollywood numbered in the hundreds, Hannah started a company in England that made television films written by blacklisted writers. All her investors knew that was the concept, but it was kept secret from the networks and distribution syndicates who eventually bought the six series that she managed to produce despite having no prior experience in the field.

A few of us at first—more than twenty as the operation expanded—depended on this work for a major part of our income until we began to find work in the open market. Our checks, made out to pseudonyms under which we had to maintain bank accounts, came from a corporation called Dilipa, an acronym from the names of Hannah's three daughters.

In her last decade, Hannah established herself as a commercial movie producer, making a considerable profit from *Stir Crazy*, with Richard Pryor and Gene Wilder. But what seemed to matter more to her than that was an award for liberal citizenship that she was to receive from the Liberty Hill Foundation in Los Angeles next month, on the anniversary of F.D.R.'s death.

RING LARDNER JR.

Ring Lardner Jr. is an author and semiretired screenwriter.

AMPLIFICATION

In the typescript of the "Sovieticus" column in *The Nation* of March 17, Stephen F. Cohen wrote that Chernenko's generation of Soviet officials had risen to power in the 1930s and 1940s "with blood on their feet." That was changed in the editing to "with blood on their hands," thereby altering the meaning. Most of those young Soviet officials did no killing themselves; they merely inherited the positions left vacant by Stalin's bloody terror.

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MINORITY REPORT.

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

It has become clear in the past few days that the gimmicky term "Cartergate," or "Briefinggate," will not do as a description of the Reaganite malfeasance in 1980. Such cheerful comparisons suggest Watergate was a caper rather than an attempt to overturn the Constitution and an effort to bring "special interests" to bear on the political process. The latest evidence puts "Debategate" in the same class as its parent—which is to say in the class of conservative political subversion.

Three recent developments justify that statement. First comes the hearing on the confirmation of Edwin Meese 3d as Attorney General. It has become evident in the course of the proceeding that Meese's memory is not the issue. He was virtually a party to the theft of President Carter's papers and other official documents. If he does recall it, he is a liar as well. If he doesn't recall it, he is too stupid and too shifty to be Attorney General. It's that simple.

Second comes the opinion delivered by Judge Harold Greene of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia on February 29 that the Attorney General's office has utterly misunderstood the Ethics in Government Act. Judge Greene, in denying William French Smith's motion to dismiss a public interest lawsuit on the theft of Carter's papers, and in reviewing the law on the matter, leaned toward the appointment of an "independent counsel"—commonly termed a special prosecutor—to investigate what the Justice Department has failed even to probe.

Third comes a shattering memorandum from the Reagan-Bush election committee, dated September 17, 1980, and produced upon Senator Howard Metzenbaum's questioning. It is from Reagan aide William Timmons, and is headed "To Ed Meese—What Think?" The memo was sent through Max Hugel, a campaign aide. It reported that Air Force Gen. Richard H. Ellis, then head of the Strategic Air Command,

> has requested a sitdown with the Governor [Reagan] to discuss the deterioration of Strategic Air Command. Due to his rank and position he cannot formally institute the meeting, but if a meeting were requested by RR, he would be happy to sit down with him. . . . The General has said he "wants to blow Jimmy Carter out of the water."

Three points here. First, the general was reluctant only "due to his rank and position," not, on the face of it, due to his oath of loyalty. Second, he made his approach to Meese through Hugel, whose insider trading activities and conflicts of interest have since made him too malodorous even to continue as the C.I.A.'s director of covert operations. Third, Reagan appointed General Ellis, now retired, to the U.S.-Soviet Standing Consultative Committee on compliance with nuclear arms treaties.

This is the kind of stuff that was floating around the Reagan offices four years ago, augmented by stolen materials from various executive offices. It's not quite *Seven Days in May*, perhaps, but it is rather close to the wind. So was William Casey's operation involving a network of "retired military officers" to monitor preparations for the Iranian hostage rescue mission. As related by Robert Garrick, who was in charge of "plans and policy" for the Reagan campaign, the purpose of that little initiative was to forestall an "October surprise" on Jimmy Carter's part. His account is borne out by Richard Wirthlin, Reagan's chief pollster. What might have been good for the United States would have been bad for the Republican Party.

Even in opposition, the Reaganites regarded public property—including the military—as their private domain. We ought to know more about the extent of what might be called divided loyalty among the officer class. But we won't if Reagan's oxymoronic Justice Department has anything to do with it. White House counsel Fred Fielding stopped his internal inquiry into dirty-pool election tactics last July. Justice folded its own investigation on February 23, having labored for eight months to produce a three-page "nothing in it" memorandum. The memo contains the unbelievable claim that "the department uncovered no credible evidence that the transfer violated any criminal law."

The *transfer*. As Judge Greene put it in his closely reasoned opinion of February 29:

> Indeed, the government goes so far as to assert, more pointedly, that the term "mole" has no "criminal overtones"; that there are likewise no such "overtones" to an information gathering apparatus employed by a Presidential campaign which uses former agents of the FBI and the CIA; and that the statement of Budget Director Stockman—that briefing books were "filched"—may have had a connotation other than theft.
>
> These contentions entirely lack merit. To be sure, none of the information summarized above is sufficient, without more, to prove the guilt of any particular individual beyond a reasonable doubt; it may not even be sufficient to support the indictment of any particular individual by a Grand Jury. But that is not the standard that Congress had in mind when it directed that an Ethics Act investigation be conducted whenever information of high-level involvement in criminal conduct is received. In fact, the intention of the Congress is the precise opposite. The Senate report states that "as soon as there is *any indication whatsoever* that the allegations involving a high-level official may be serious or have *any potential chance of substantiation*, a special prosecutor should be appointed to take over the investigation."

Yet it all goes on. William Webster transferred the heac of the F.B.I.'s Washington field office, Theodore Gard ner, to Portland, Oregon, for merely discussing the possi bility of giving lie detector tests to members of the Adminis tration. Representative Donald Albosta has reneged on hi promise to hold public hearings and has issued no sub poenas. Meese fibs and bluffs his way toward confirmation Only John Banzhaf, a professor at George Washington Uni versity Law School, has made any attempt to clear th stables. It was his suit that Judge Greene upheld. His mo tion to appoint a special prosecutor will be heard shortly One will be able to tell a good deal about the Democrati Presidential candidates by noticing which of them suppor this idea—publicly and soon.

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ARTICLES.

SOUTH DAKOTA TRAPS ITS MAN

The Hounding of Dennis Banks

CONSTANCE MATTHIESSEN

The world of Dennis Banks, fiery leader of the American Indian Movement, keeps shrinking. During the 1960s and early 1970s Banks became a nationally recognized figure. He was seen by both his supporters and his detractors as an energetic and charismatic leader. A Chippewa Indian from Minnesota and a cofounder of AIM in 1968, Banks played a role in the movement's most controversial activities, participating in the 1969 occupation of Alcatraz and the 1972 takeover of the Bureau of Indian Affairs headquarters in Washington. But Banks is probably best known as a leader of the 1973 takeover of the South Dakota town of Wounded Knee. Several hundred Indians engaged in that action, a protest against treaty violations and Bureau of Indian Affairs misconduct. Federal officials surrounded the hamlet. The standoff lasted for seventy-one days and resulted in the death of two Indians and serious injury to one U.S. marshal. Criminal charges against Banks for his role in the incident were dismissed in 1974, but while awaiting sentencing on a riot and assault conviction arising out of a 1973 demonstration in Custer, South Dakota, Banks jumped bail. Five months later he surfaced in California. He requested sanctuary from Gov. Jerry Brown, claiming that his life would be in danger in a South Dakota prison. After two years of review and controversy, Brown refused South Dakota's request to extradite Banks.

For seven years Banks and his family carried on a normal life in Davis, California. But in 1983 Jerry Brown was succeeded by former State Attorney General George Deukmejian, a law-and-order Republican and longtime critic of Brown's decision to harbor Banks. Within hours of Deukmejian's inauguration, in January 1983, California police officers appeared at Banks's home. They were too late: Banks had fled the state several days earlier. At the end of the month, he surfaced on the Onondaga Indian territory, 7,300 acres of wild, wooded land in upstate New York, near Syracuse.

The Onondaga chiefs welcomed Banks and it was hoped that New York Gov. Mario Cuomo would offer him sanctuary. Indeed, Banks had decided to go to New York partly because Cuomo had shown sympathy for Indian concerns when he was New York Secretary of State. But the newly elected Governor put off a final decision, though he promised that police would not be allowed on Onondaga land to apprehend Banks. The Onondagas, who consider themselves an independent nation, regard any intervention by state or Federal authorities as a violation of their sovereignty, and they promised to oppose any attempt to seize Banks.

Banks says he is happy with the Onondagas: he is building a house, and in the spring his wife, KaMook, will have another child. "Even though I'm restricted to an area, that doesn't restrict my life," Banks told me recently. But his freedom *is* restricted, and as the geographical boundaries that limit his actions have narrowed, so have his options. Last year an Assistant Attorney General in the Justice Department's criminal division, Lowell Jensen, obtained a Federal indictment against Banks which, added to the South Dakota charges, make his chance for freedom all the more remote.

At 10 A.M. last September 22, U.S. Attorney for South Dakota Philip Hogen and several U.S. marshals appeared on the Onondaga territory carrying an Indian necktie to demonstrate good will. Hogen demanded that Banks be turned over to his custody. The Onondaga chiefs refused and Hogen produced his surprise: the Federal warrant for Banks's arrest on the ground of unlawful flight to avoid confinement. The indictment pre-empts state law and thus prevents Governor Cuomo, or any other governor, from providing Banks sanctuary.

Hogen also proposed a deal: if Banks would return to South Dakota, Hogen would recommend that he receive the minimum sentence for the unlawful flight. The chiefs were given until 4 o'clock that afternoon to produce Banks. The deadline passed without result; Hogen returned to South Dakota. Before leaving, he told one of Banks's attorneys, Joe Heath, that he would push for a maximum sentence.

But apprehending Banks will be difficult. Some observers believe the government fears that an attempt to capture Banks would lead to a bloody confrontation with the Onondagas. Banks himself thinks that if Reagan wins re-election, authorities may come to seize him. Asked if Federal law officers would enter the Onondaga territory to apprehend Banks, John Russell, a spokesman for the Justice Department, replied, "It's been discussed. There are no plans for that at this time."

Banks's attorney William Kunstler has called Banks's prosecution for unlawful flight "a total misuse of this law." Kunstler recalled that in 1967, Federal authorities refused to prosecute H. Rap Brown under the unlawful-flight provision. Fearing he would be mistreated by Virginia police, Brown wanted to be charged in order to remain in the custody of Federal marshals. According to Kunstler, "The marshals took Brown down the courthouse steps and literally threw him into the hands of state officials."

U.S. Attorney Hogen concedes that the Federal indictment is unusual. Prosecutions under the unlawful-flight statute have been extremely rare. The purpose of the law is

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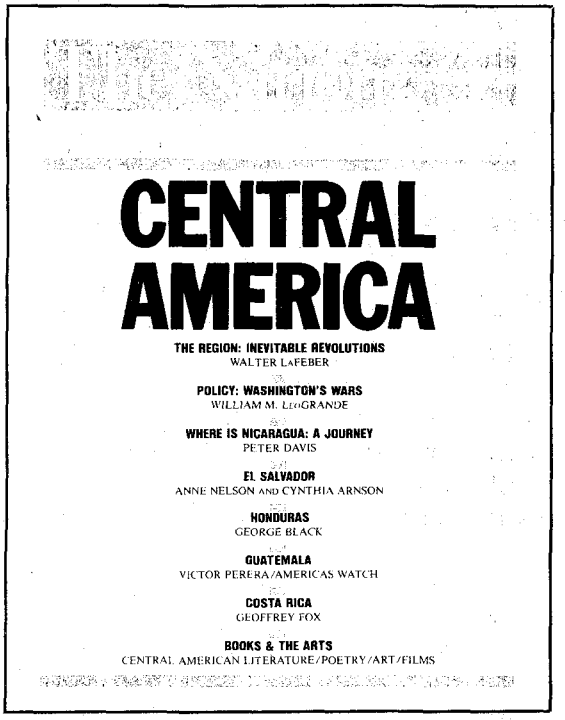

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to give the Federal Bureau of Investigation a legal basis for locating and apprehending a fugitive. When the fugitive is seized, he or she is usually turned over to state officials. According to Hogen, "I requested approval for the indictment after Banks left California for New York because he was openly and notoriously seeking to avoid South Dakota justice, and clearly planned to continue doing so."

That is not completely true. Banks has repeatedly offered to serve time in another state. Even as the Justice Department approved Hogen's request for the indictment, Banks's lawyers were considering such an arrangement with South Dakota Judge Marshall Young, the man who had tried Banks. Young and Banks's lawyers were discussing the possibility of Banks's being sentenced in absentia and the various alternatives to incarceration in South Dakota. Banks says, "We were involved in good-faith discussions to come to some sort of agreement. Now we're back to nowhere." Hogen claims that no progress was being made in the negotiations.

California Representatives Vic Fazio and Ronald V. Dellums have written letters to the Justice Department requesting an explanation for the unlawful-flight indictment. Assistant Attorney General Robert A. McConnell wrote to Fazio:

> You are correct in your understanding that this type of prosecution is pursued infrequently. While arrest warrants are regularly obtained under the unlawful flight statute, once the arrest has been made federal prosecution is generally declined in favor of release of the defendant to the appropriate state authorities for extradition to the state from which the flight originated. Statistics are not maintained concerning the unlawful flight cases in which prosecution is authorized. However, based on the recollection of Criminal Division attorneys, we know of two unlawful flight prosecutions which have occurred during the past two years. In both instances, a key factor in the determination to pursue a federal prosecution was the presence of an unreasonable risk of further flight.

In his letter McConnell identified only one of those defendants: a man facing life imprisonment for aggravated rape of a 9-year-old girl. The prisoner, who had committed numerous other rapes, had escaped and evaded authorities for over two years.

Joe Heath observes: "You have a guy who escaped from a life sentence for a heinous crime. How can you compare him to a Dennis Banks? The charges against Banks are relatively minor. Not only that but Banks was not evading justice, he was actively engaged in trying to resolve his case when this indictment was served."

Representative Dellums was not satisfied with the Justice Department's response to his inquiry. His aide Charles Stevenson told me that he believes South Dakota's request that the Justice Department obtain the indictment was designed to prevent Governor Cuomo from giving Banks sanctuary. "First you have a California Governor denying extradition. They wanted to prevent the New York Governor from doing the same," Stevenson said. "The question is, Why are they pulling out this old law in reference to

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Mr. Banks? We believe it represents a personal vendetta against Banks. How else do you explain all this effort, and now the involvement of the Justice Department, to apprehend a man on the basis of very minor charges that are ten years old?"

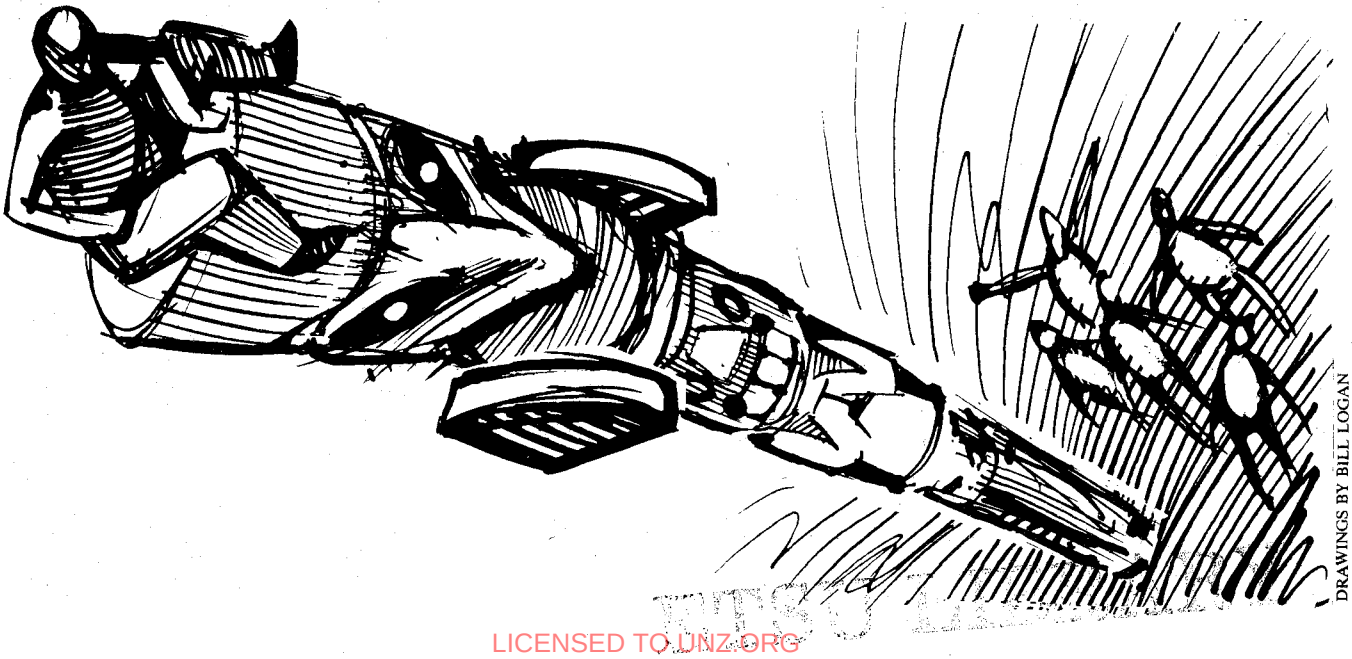
The charges against Banks arose out of the Custer demonstration, which was prompted by the fatal stabbing of a young Indian man in a barroom brawl. The alleged murderer, a white man named Darold Schmidt, was charged with involuntary manslaughter. Enraged because she thought the charge wasn't severe enough, the victim's mother, Sarah Bad Heart Bull, asked AIM for help. Banks set up a meeting with town officials to demand a stiffer charge, and brought more than 200 Indians to the town courthouse with him. Banks and several members of the delegation were inside the courthouse when fighting broke out between police and the protesters outside. Each side accuses the other of starting the fracas, which quickly became violent. The police tossed tear gas canisters, and demonstrators hurled rocks. Rioters set fire to the Chamber of Commerce building, a small wooden structure which burned to the ground. When the fighting died down, twenty-two of the protesters had been arrested; Banks was not among them. He was arrested after a few days.

When Banks was tried two years later, three of the five counts in the indictment were dismissed. He was convicted of rioting while armed and assault with a dangerous weapon—a night stick—without intent to kill. (Sarah Bad Heart Bull was convicted of rioting and spent five months in jail. The man accused of killing her son was acquitted.) Banks could receive up to fifteen years for the charges against him. His claim that his life would be in danger in a South Dakota prison must be considered against the backdrop of historic animosity between the South Dakota authorities and the Indians, who constitute less than 7 percent of the state's population. It is a state where towns and restaurants are named after Lieut. Col. George Armstrong Custer. An aide to Representative Fazio described Indian-white relations in South Dakota as "a Hatfield and McCoy situation. Unfortunately, Dennis Banks is the one who has had to pay for it."

During the 1960s and 1970s the struggle by Banks and other activists for Indian rights churned up considerable fear and hostility among whites in the state. AIM has been the storm center of that conflict, the object of persecution and violence as well as F.B.I. infiltration. Before leaving South Dakota, Banks claimed he heard of prison officials saying that no AIM leader would last twenty minutes in a prison there. South Dakota attorney John Gridley claims to have heard Gov. William Janklow say, when he was State Attorney General, that the solution to the problem was to shoot the AIM leaders: "Put a bullet in a guy's head and he won't bother you anymore." (In a subsequent interview, Janklow emphasized that he was referring to the AIM leadership, not to Indians in general, and added, "I told him [Gridley] . . . that in the event that I was Attorney General or in a position of authority and they came around with their guns and their arms and either threatened people or used them on people, that I would see to it that they were shot.") AIM leader Russell Means was in fact stabbed in the South Dakota penitentiary. "Dennis Banks's life won't be worth a nickel if he is returned for sentencing," Means says.

The feud between Indians and whites is epitomized in the relationship between Banks and Governor Janklow. Janklow was swept into office in 1978 on a wave of anti-AIM sentiment, but his clashes with Banks began much earlier. In 1974 Banks served as prosecuting attorney in a Rosebud Sioux tribal court proceeding in which Janklow was accused of attempting to rape a young Indian girl. The assault allegedly occurred in 1967, when Janklow was director of the Legal Services program on the reservation. (No charges were ever filed against Janklow in a Federal or state court; after investigating the incident in 1975, the F.B.I. concluded that there was no substance to the allegation.) When Banks was brought to trial in 1975, Janklow was State Attorney General, and their previous roles were reversed.

This stormy history causes many to fear for Banks's life should he be forced to return to South Dakota. California



DRAWINGS BY BILL LOGAN

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Municipal Court Judge Alice Lytle, who, as Jerry Brown's Deputy Legal Affairs Secretary, conducted an exhaustive review of Banks's case in 1978, explained in the decision to deny extradition:

> The decision was premised on the history of Indian-white relations in South Dakota and the activities of Dennis Banks, which angered a lot of people, and the personal animosity of Janklow toward Banks. When you balance that against the relatively light conviction—he wasn't convicted of murder or armed robbery, he was convicted of riot and assault without intent to kill, and these are typical charges that arise out of demonstrations—when you balance the circumstances against the need that South Dakota had to imprison him behind these charges, the danger to his life seemed significant enough to refuse the extradition request.

Banks's supporters argue that if anything, the hostility toward Banks in South Dakota has grown stronger in the ten years since the Custer incident took place. The state's zeal in pursuing Banks and the support that pursuit has received from the Justice Department seem exaggerated in relation to his crimes.

Restricted to the Onondaga territory, Banks is isolated from the legal and political decisions that affect his future. But since his arrival in New York, his situation has drawn increasing attention. The Syracuse *Herald American* invited Banks to contribute a column. New York Representative Edolphus Towns plans to meet with Banks in the fall. An aide to Towns said recently, "The Congressman wants to ascertain the true facts in this case. Here's a guy they've chased from state to state—the nature of his crimes doesn't seem to warrant that. Why is this guy such a special case? Why is Dennis Banks so important?"

U.S. Attorney Hogen responds to such questions with the weary patience of a man who has heard them all many times before. "Banks's behavior is not the point," he told me. "The point is that there are outstanding proceedings here. Banks was convicted, he promised to appear for sentencing and then he left the state. Justice has not yet been done."

Asked about Banks's safety, Hogen replied, "I firmly believe that the South Dakota correction system is safe and that there is no danger to Banks or to any other prisoner. Having said that, I'm also certain that if and when he is sentenced, Banks will not be imprisoned in South Dakota. There has been so much controversy surrounding the question of his safety that if a wall fell on him, everyone would say, 'I told you so.' It makes no sense to risk that kind of trouble." The South Dakota Division of Charities and Corrections would ultimately determine Banks's incarceration site, Hogen said.

The stalemate between the Justice Department and the Onondaga chiefs continues. It is possible the department is happy with the situation as it is. The Federal indictment is a quiet way of neutralizing Banks. No state can grant him sanctuary while the indictment is outstanding, so Banks has nowhere to run. He may not be in prison, but the constraints on his freedom prevent him from playing the kind of strong leadership role he played as a free man in South Dakota. If that was the goal of South Dakota authorities and the Reagan Administration, they have been successful.

Banks remains busy. This past winter he organized a food and clothing drive for Indians in South Dakota, where record temperatures made life on the impoverished reservations harsher than usual. He is organizing a cross-country run from the Onondaga territory to Los Angeles, where Native Americans will join in pre-Olympic games in memory of Indian Olympic champion Jim Thorpe. But in May, when the runners begin the 3,000-mile trip, Banks will be able to lead them only as far as the border of his current sanctuary. □

DICTATORSHIP ON THE ROCKS

The Economic Threat to Marcos

PETER TARR

Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos was shooting at scapegoats last December, when he blamed the Western press for "contributing to the difficulties now being encountered by the Philippines, with biased and distorted reporting." In fact the media's fascination with the grisly details of the assassination of Benigno Aquino Jr., and with the government's clumsy investigation of the affair, has paradoxically helped Marcos, diverting attention from the most serious crisis he has yet faced: the virtual collapse of the country's economy.

In the frenzy that consumed Manila for several months after the August 21 assassination, nervous foreign investors withdrew nearly $1 billion from Philippine banks. The impact was devastating. Foreign deposits had been used to finance raw material imports which kept factories running; they also helped the government make interest payments on a mountain of short-term debts. In September and October the Philippine Central Bank had to draw on its foreign exchange reserves to pay those bills. By mid-October reserves stood at $430 million, drastically lower than June's level of $2.3 billion and scarcely enough to purchase a month's supply of imported commodities. Taking orders from the International Monetary Fund, the Central Bank then imposed strict controls on foreign exchange, declared a ninety-day moratorium on principal payments on the nation's $25 billion foreign debt and devalued the peso 21.4 percent. (The currency had already been devalued 9.4 percent in June.) Banks could authorize credit only for the most critical imports: oil and food. Businessmen who relied on "nonessential" imports saw their inventories dwindle, and many were

Peter Tarr is a freelance writer living in New York City. He traveled in the Philippines last November and December and contributed articles from there to The Christian Science Monitor.

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forced to scale down production. Tens of thousands were laid off.

Marcos and the technocrats who manage the economy were painfully aware of the meaning behind a slogan that began to appear on T-shirts in October: "I'm mortgaged to the I.M.F." But they knew that 350 commercial creditors in the United States, Japan and Western Europe would not allow the Philippines to default. And they believed that the U.S. government—which operates its largest overseas military bases at Subic Naval Base and Clark Air Base, and whose citizens hold investments in the Philippines valued at more than $2 billion—would go to great lengths to help the regime avert economic collapse.

Although the "Aquino movement" snowballed after the assassination, Marcos clearly did not perceive a serious threat to his authority and only grudgingly adopted a conciliatory public stance. Demands for his resignation were ascribed to a peculiar euphoria (described by a Philippine newspaper columnist as "laughter on the verge of tears"). For several months, a carnival atmosphere prevailed in Makati, Manila's financial district, the scene of frequent antigovernment protest rallies. Office workers tossed confetti from high-rise buildings, and in the streets below, demonstrators carrying placards and shouting slogans marched to the fanfare of brass bands. But as one rally organizer noted in December, "throwing confetti isn't going to force Marcos to resign."

Marcos took heart in the opposition's disunity. By the end of the year prominent leaders, including former Senators Lorenzo Tanada, Jose Diokno and Salvador Laurel, had been unable to adopt a coordinated strategy. They were busy debating whether to advise Filipinos to vote in a constitutional plebiscite set for January and in legislative elections that are to be held in May. The opposition was unsure how to sustain public interest in the protest movement but figured that its best hope lay in the continued deterioration of the economy during the first months of 1984. If the combined effects of inflation and unemployment were as severe as some economists were predicting, there would be ample support for a civil disobedience campaign to force Marcos to make significant concessions.

Meanwhile Marcos dispatched government ministers to creditor nations, seeking new loans, debt restructuring agreements and emergency aid. Their task was formidable. For the third consecutive year the nation was running up a balance of payments deficit in excess of $2 billion. World market prices for traditional Philippine exports (sugar, coconut products and copper) were low, and half the earnings would be consumed by interest payments on foreign debt. The purchasing power of the peso had plummeted 60 percent since 1978. One-third of the work force was underemployed. And for 1984 a 35 percent inflation rate was predicted, while the economy was expected to contract.

In November Prime Minister Cesar Virata secured a letter of intent from I.M.F. managing director Jacques de Larosière for a $645.7 million loan to bolster the nation's reserves. Virata hoped the I.M.F. loan would spur $1.6 billion

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SOME SIMLARITIES BETWEEN CHRIST AND KARL MARX

1. Both castigated the rich.
2. Both opposed organized religion. Christ advised that when ye pray, pray not like the hypocrites in the synogogues and those standing on street corners so they can be seen by men. But when ye pray, enter your closet secretly, pray in secret and the Father shall reward ye openly.
3. Both had compassion for the underdog, Christ for the poor and Marx for the exploited factory worker of his day.
4. Both were Jews.
5. Both were revolutionaries. Christ said: "Think not that I come on earth to bring peace. I come not to bring peace but the sword." So when the pope during Christmas season extols Christ as the Prince of Peace, the pope is misrepresenting Christ. Moreover, the philosophy of Christ was diametrically opposed to the Old Testament code of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth in that Christ said turn the other cheek, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, the Golden Rule, etc.
6. Both died in disgrace, Christ on the cross, Marx rejected in utter poverty.
7. Neither of their ideas were accepted during their respective lifetimes.
8. After their deaths, their followers were persecuted, Christians for 300 years, fed to the lions; Marx till the present by invasion by Nazis, Korean and Vietnam wars, McCarthyism in the U.S. domestic scene, Marxist Nicaragua being terrorized by Reagan.
9. Christ said a prophet is not without honor except in his own country. Marx was exiled from his native Germany and wrote his works in England.
10. Both were opposed to the status quo of their times.
11. Both believed in an ultimate society whereby cooperation would replace dog-eat-dog competition.
12. Both hoped for a society where there would be the brotherhood of man.
13. Christ said: "He who humbles himself shall be exalted." Christ was humbled by crucifixion and was therefore exalted. Marx had a brilliant university scholastic record and could have led a comfortable, respectable life as a professor but humbled himself for the sake of the exploited worker. So now Marx is exalted by nearly a third of mankind.
14. Both believed in force and violence since Christ used this method to chase the money lenders from the temple.
15. Both practiced selfless humanitarianism.
16. In the final stage of Marxian Communism there is no ownership of private property. Christ owned nothing but the clothes on his back when he died.

Imperative that you write Reagan. Urge him to stop terrorizing the Nicaraguan people. Richard Hildebrandt, 3000 Monroe Ave. NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49505. Comments welcomed.

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in new commercial loans and $560 million in credits from the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank; in addition he planned to solicit $1 billion in aid from the United States and Japan. But when it became evident in December that the Philippine government had lied to I.M.F. officials about the level of its Central Bank reserves—a $600 million "overestimate"—the I.M.F. dispatched a team of investigators to Manila, and commercial lenders backed off. Final approval of the I.M.F. loan was delayed and, in fact, is still pending. Commercial bankers, therefore, have not even begun to negotiate the extent of their participation in the government's short-term bailout scheme. The debt moratorium has been extended through June, and trade financing remains almost nonexistent. The number of business failures and layoffs continues to mount.

Bankers and economic analysts correctly predicted that the government would have difficulty convincing the I.M.F.'s "financial sheriffs" that it could comply with their austerity provisions: reduced government spending, tighter controls on foreign exchange, a 10 to 15 percent cut in imports and further devaluation of the peso. Their skepticism did not deter Virata, who, in December, plunged into negotiations to reschedule more than $9 billion of the nation's debt. Creditors, however, have since indicated that no agreement will be reached until after the May elections. This is a setback for Marcos and Virata, who proclaimed four months ago that the crisis was over.

"Virata's plans are hopelessly optimistic," confided a Western banker based in Manila. "Rather than a recovery I think you're going to see perhaps 400,000 layoffs before June and no growth for at least three years—and that's the best-case scenario."

Independent risk-assessments have been similarly bleak. A report prepared last October by Business International, a U.S. consulting firm, warned foreign investors that "the downward spiral will accelerate. In the current political environment corporate planning and budgeting are impossible. The question . . . is whether the current government is capable of generating the confidence [necessary] to manage austerity and repay rescheduled debts. The answer is no."

There are more serious problems beyond the immediate crisis of confidence. The economy has been riddled with structural flaws that were noted by some observers years before the "panic" of 1983 but downplayed by most creditors and friendly governments as their involvement in the Philippines deepened.

After Marcos declared martial law in 1972 a development strategy orchestrated by the World Bank and the I.M.F. opened the country to an unprecedented wave of foreign investment. Marcos rewrote laws to create a favorable climate for foreign business. Billions of petrodollars were channeled into the Philippines. But the infusion of capital over a decade failed to mitigate the essential characteristics of the economy: inefficiency and corruption.

Foreign investments and economic aid financed a disproportionate share of export-oriented agribusiness and industrial ventures. Import protection stifled the development of competitive domestic industries. The economy remained predominantly agricultural, and there was no substantial redistribution of income. In fact, "modernization" in the Philippines principally benefited foreign-owned multinational corporations, foreign creditors and, not least of all, the Marcos clan and its cronies. Under martial law (which lasted until 1981) Marcos successfully dismantled key elements of a once-powerful oligarchy, but simultaneously created economic fiefdoms for a much smaller, more pliable clique. Two notorious members are Roberto S. Benedicto, who gained virtual control of the Philippine sugar industry, and Eduardo Cojuangco, who secured a monopoly in the coconut industry. Other friends of the regime were able to obtain credit from government institutions for a variety of projects, a practice which, in effect, denied capital to the most efficient users.

Enticed by lengthy tax holidays, below-market-rate rents and one of the lowest wage scales in Southeast Asia, foreigners eagerly invested in the Philippine economy. A range of products, from toothpaste to automobiles, were manufactured under licensing agreements that insured healthy profits for foreign entrepreneurs. At the same time, Filipinos grew increasingly dependent on Western goods. Although the country's exports increased by 362 percent from 1963 to 1978, imports during the same period increased by 665 percent.

The economy expanded under martial law, but the benefits did not trickle down, in part because Marcos allowed foreigners to repatriate their investments. According to figures compiled by the Central Bank, foreigners brought $485.1 million into the country from 1972 to 1976, and repatriated $483.4 million during the same period. In 1976, to cite a typical year, U.S. corporations paid $457,000 to the Philippine Internal Revenue Service; they repatriated $47 million. Moreover, most foreign "investments" did not represent "new" overseas money. For every dollar brought in during the 1972-76 period, foreigners borrowed $25 from Philippine banks.

In 1972 the World Bank designated the Philippines a "country of concentration" and embarked on an ambitious program to bolster the nation's export earnings. During the next ten years the bank loaned nearly $2.6 billion to the Philippine government, much of it for infrastructure and energy projects, which were needed to develop labor-intensive export industries capable of competing with those of South Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong.

But many of the projects were not completed until the late 1970s, just as the world economy plunged into a deep recession. Western nations raised protectionist trade barriers, and demand for the relatively high-priced Philippine exports shrank. After several rounds of I.M.F.-dictated devaluations, Philippine exports became more competitive, but those devaluations caused the price of vital imports to soar. That, in turn, fueled the nation's chronic balance of payments problem. The government resorted to short-term borrowing to make up the difference but, in the process, accumulated debts it could not afford to service without borrowing more. The debt, which had ballooned from $1.3 billion to

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$11.9 billion during the nine years of martial law, more than doubled again between 1981 and 1983.

Export-oriented growth exacted a high human cost. In one notable case, more than 14,000 lowland rice farmers in central Luzon were resettled—against their wishes—on small, unproductive upland lots in order to make way for a World Bank-financed hydroelectric dam. Power from the dam was supplied to distant urban manufacturing zones, such as the one in Bataan, near Manila. In that enclave of foreign industry only eight of thirty-three businesses were wholly owned by Filipinos in 1983. In Mindanao, the southernmost of the principal Philippine islands, the development of export-oriented agribusinesses resulted in the forcible eviction of about 250,000 residents during the martial law years.

That brute-force approach to modernization was only one aspect of the Marcos government's pervasive militarization of the countryside. Thanks to generous U.S. support, the nation's armed forces grew from 56,000 to 236,000 men during the period, and annual military expenditures shot from $82 million to $1 billion. Soldiers were dispatched to the provinces to fight insurgents of the New People's Army, the armed wing of the Philippine Communist Party. In Mindanao they also skirmished sporadically with guerrillas of the Moslem-secessionist Moro National Liberation Front. But the specter of 30,000 armed insurgents was only part of the story behind the military buildup. The growing possibility of mass unrest in poverty-stricken rural areas was just as significant a factor.

Western development agencies claim they have helped Philippine farmers by bringing Green Revolution technology to the provinces. Crop yields have indeed risen dramatically (the Philippines no longer imports rice), but the new technology has been expensive. In the wake of the oil shocks of the 1970s, rice and corn farmers who had become dependent on high-yield seed varieties and petrochemical-based fertilizers manufactured by Western multinationals were caught in a bind: they could not afford price increases and at the same time make annual mortgage payments on land they were eligible to own under the government's highly touted land reform program. The Green Revolution had forced many farmers deep into debt, and during the martial law years only 1,799 of 427,623 potential beneficiaries secured land titles. About half the nation's arable land is not even subject to the reforms. There the Marcos coterie and foreign-owned agribusinesses cultivate export crops. Wages on the plantations range from $1.50 a day for sugar workers in Negros to $5 a day for pineapple workers in Mindanao. Austerity has hit those laborers particularly hard. Last year's devaluations meant higher prices for increasingly scarce basic commodities and a decline in real wages.

Some observers contend that since the United States stands to lose its leverage in any violent social upheaval, its policy-makers will push for genuine political and economic reform. However, judging from a State Department overview offered last June to the House Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs, there seems little cause for optimism:

> The present government of the Philippines has a variety of strengths. It can boast a very creditable record of economic growth over the last decade. . . . Its economic policies are supervised by highly capable economic managers. . . . The government's land reform program . . . has been largely successful [as has been] its export diversification policy. The government is making serious efforts to alleviate poverty. It has had skillful leadership and a substantial political following throughout the country.

The subcommittee obtained a more revealing glimpse of the rationale behind U.S. policy from Adm. Robert L.J. Long, then the Navy's commander in chief of Pacific forces. He stated that a strong U.S. presence in the Philippines is necessary in light of

> the ideology that the Soviet Union has laid down and has followed ever since the Revolution . . . that ideology is that we are going to have a state of war between the Soviet Union and the rest of the world until the remainder of the world consists of basically Marxist states.

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Dean Peter W. Stanley of Carleton College, a respected Philippines scholar, put it another way: "As long as we are committed to a strategic policy that requires us to have that kind of a forward presence [in the Pacific], and we have not taken any steps to develop alternatives, it seems Marcos has us over a barrel." The Defense Department estimates it would cost $3 billion to $6 billion to relocate the Philippine bases.

The Reagan Administration has reaffirmed its commitment to the Marcos regime on several occasions since the Aquino assassination. Reagan even made an appeal to Japanese Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone in Marcos's behalf last November. Marcos, prudently heeding the advice of Western diplomats and financiers, has granted cosmetic concessions to the political opposition: free debate during the upcoming National Assembly election campaign and a new succession plan that lessens (though by no means eliminates) First Lady Imelda Marcos's chances of assuming the presidency. But the composition of the National Assembly will be of minimal importance as long as Marcos retains the power to dissolve the body at whim; and under the succession scheme it is probable that leaders of the armed forces will at least temporarily fill the political void that would be created in the event of Marcos's death. (It has long been rumored that he suffers from kidney disease.) Unlike the technocrats, the nation's military chiefs have not been held responsible for the current economic mess.

Representative Stephen Solarz, chairman of the House Asian and Pacific Affairs subcommittee, recently proposed diverting the bulk of America's annual $180 million aid commitment from military to social and economic programs. This would send a long-overdue message to the Marcos regime, one which might increase pressure for clean elections in May. However, Congress has little leverage in determining how U.S. money is spent once it reaches the Philippines. Economic support funds—85 percent of the proposed 1985 aid package—are disbursed by the Minister of Human Settlements, Imelda Marcos. With relative ease, the Philippine government can redirect funds from the ministry's budget to the general coffers and spend the money as it pleases.

As Filipinos head into what will likely be a protracted period of economic hardship, their nation's creditors and would-be benefactors scramble to protect their own interests. "The creditors won't get their principal back," one U.S. banker observed, "they [only] want continuing interest payments to flow in. That's their business: collecting interest, not amassing huge sums of principal." Although their once-cozy relationship with Marcos has soured, the sheer magnitude of their investment will no doubt provide the rationale for participating in bailout schemes that will strengthen the regime's hand in the short run, and deepen Philippine dependence on the West in the long run. Even if Marcos and Virata succeed in averting default, their strategy offers nothing for most Filipinos. Austerity will be enforced at the expense of those least able to afford it.

Two months before he was murdered, Benigno Aquino posed a rhetorical question to members of the House subcommittee: "Must we destroy in order to build?" Then Aquino said, "I refuse to believe that it is necessary for a nation to build its foundations on the bones of its young." The assumption that Filipinos will indefinitely endure a heavy burden of repression and exploitation underlies the West's continuing commitment to the Marcos dictatorship. In the end it may promote the tragic upheaval that Aquino wanted so desperately to avoid. □

'SILKWOOD' AT M.I.T.

The Lab Worker's Lonely Victory

JOSEPH R. EGAN AND DAVID F. NOBLE

Whatever its esthetic merits, the film *Silkwood* is a stirring tribute to the fight its real-life hero waged to bring her cause to the public's attention. On January 11, not long after the film was released, the Supreme Court vindicated more than a decade of efforts by Karen Silkwood and her co-workers at the Kerr-McGee plutonium processing plant by ruling she had a right to sue the company under state law for injuries due to its mismanagement of radioactive materials. For workers in hazardous industries, the lesson is clear: it pays to go public.

For at least ten years, health experts have debated the adequacy of Federal regulations setting the levels of radiation and contamination to which workers in nuclear facilities may safely be exposed. Despite considerable evidence that those standards are too lenient, workers have not been able to challenge them successfully in or out of the courts. And prior to the Court's ruling in *Silkwood v. Kerr-McGee*, workers' suits for damages under state law were refused on the ground that the 1954 Atomic Energy Act gives the Nuclear Regulatory Commission exclusive jurisdiction over nuclear safety matters.

Because the physical effects often do not appear for years after exposure, state workers' compensation laws do not generally cover injuries or illnesses caused by radiation exposure on the job. And if contaminated outside the workplace by radioactive materials which can easily and silently escape detection at a plant's exit gate, as happened to Silkwood, the workers had no recourse at all. The N.R.C. could offer injured workers no personal satisfaction. At most it would gently slap the employer with a fine, which rarely exceeded $10,000.

Joseph R. Egan, a former nuclear engineer who was trained at M.I.T., is studying law at Columbia University. David F. Noble, associate professor of the history of technology at M.I.T., is curator of industrial automation at the Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution. Noble is the author of Forces of Production: A Social History of Industrial Automation in the U.S., *forthcoming from Knopf.*

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Under the *Silkwood* decision, workers may recover compensatory and punitive damages whether or not the company is found to be negligent. Perhaps more important, the decision allows a state jury to set its own safety standards, thus enabling it to find a nuclear facility liable for damages even if it has complied with Federal safety standards.

Machinists working with radioactive materials at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology recently won a round in a case similar to though less well known than Silkwood's. It too involved a lone, courageous worker who challenged management and the nuclear regulatory bureaucracy. Vincent Raulinaitis, who had been employed as an instrument maker for twenty-one years at M.I.T.'s Laboratory of Nuclear Science, discovered by accident that the metals he had been working with in the laboratory's machine shop (which came from the institute's Bates Linear Accelerator) were radioactive. He had not been told that, nor had he received any training, protective equipment or monitoring devices to guard himself against exposure.

When Raulinaitis protested, laboratory officials sought to "solve" the problem by designating him and those similarly employed as official radiation workers and supplying them with film badges to measure future exposure. That did not satisfy Raulinaitis. He refused to participate in the institute's after-the-fact charade and continued to demand information on his exposure. As a result, he was fired for "insubordination." Moreover, the health physics technician who measured the radioactivity levels in the shop at Raulinaitis's request was reprimanded by his superiors and warned that his job was in jeopardy. Both men filed grievances and demanded M.I.T. records showing present and past exposure levels. The institute refused to comply, a stance consistent with its opposition to the extension of state "right to know" laws to colleges and universities.

In the course of his fight, Raulinaitis discovered a gaping hole in the Federal regulatory process, left when the Atomic Energy Commission was dismantled in 1974. At that point the nuclear energy bureaucracy was separated according to its regulatory and promotional functions. Health and safety matters at privately owned nuclear reactors were properly assigned to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. But government- and university-run nuclear accelerators, laboratories and enrichment facilities were regulated by the Department of Energy, which had been established solely to promote nuclear energy. That allowed the government to sidestep expensive health and safety measures at its nuclear weapons facilities. Although the D.O.E. imposes protection standards identical to those at reactors monitored by the N.R.C., its inspection program is virtually nonexistent and it lacks the N.R.C.'s power to levy fines. The department had never inspected the shop in which Raulinaitis worked.

Raulinaitis sought help from the N.R.C., the Massachusetts Department of Health and the Federal Occupational Health and Safety Administration, to no avail. He filed a union grievance, the arbitration of which was repeatedly postponed. Frustrated by M.I.T.'s stonewalling and by the lack of legal remedies, Raulinaitis went public. In June 1982 his horror story was told in a series of articles in *The Boston Globe*, which had dramatic, if delayed, impact.

Arbitration proceedings began, and in the first round the arbitrator ordered M.I.T. to honor the health physics technician's request for information and documentation regarding the composition of and the procedural controls over the radioactive materials in question. Rather than comply, M.I.T. rescinded its reprimand against the worker.

Last month, before the arbitrator could rule in Raulinaitis's case, the Research, Development and Technical Employees Union, representing Raulinaitis, approved a settlement with M.I.T., the details of which have been kept confidential. One development that led to the agreement holds great significance for workers in government- or university-owned nuclear facilities. M.I.T. revised its in-house regulations covering the type of radioactive materials Raulinaitis worked with. The maximum permissible level of radiation has been lowered by a factor of fifty. As a result the university's standard is twenty times more stringent than the Federal government's. Thus, M.I.T. has tacitly admitted the validity of Raulinaitis's charges. Indeed, its new regulations, adopted under the duress of public scrutiny, are sure to prompt other facilities regulated only by the D.O.E., and other affected workers in such facilities, to question seriously the prudence of operating under the more lenient Federal standards.

The victories won by Silkwood (posthumously) and by M.I.T. workers (thanks to Raulinaitis) will affect the nation's radiation-related workplaces for years to come. They demonstrate to workers in all high-risk industries, as nothing else could, that it pays to go public. □

Counterjournalism

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

and in newspapers is not news either. Something else is responsible: the news industry's reaction against investigative journalism, their near-contempt for it. Sherrill's old-fashioned idea that the sins of the powerful need exposure no longer fits the more "sophisticated" code of reporters, which holds that any story that has heroes and villains falsifies human nature. (Actually, Sherrill's story has only villains, no heroes.)

America seems to have entered a phase of counterjournalism, led by newspapers themselves. The anger and indignation that once moved reporters to uncover the crimes of the powerful has turned on those who challenge power's prerogatives. Thus a *New York Times* editorial denounced the makers of *Silkwood* for implying the film is a documentary and ignored the well-known corporate villainy of Kerr-McGee. And thus many book reviewers criticized Sherrill instead of attacking the oil industry for its sins. An article by James Fallows in *The New York Times Book Review* was

Alan Wolfe is a member of The Nation*'s editorial board. An updated and expanded version of his* The Rise and Fall of the Soviet Threat *will be published in May by South End Press.*

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typical. Fallows is an excellent journalist, except when he lets his ideology of moderation and balance get in the way of the truth. After paying a tribute to Sherrill's knowledge of the subject, Fallows faults him for presenting an "unyielding, one-sided, no-exceptions view of the oil companies as the authors of all evil." Yet Fallows offers little evidence to the contrary, while Sherrill documents that they are precisely that.

Fallows has more interesting things on his mind than disagreement with Sherrill's unrestrained condemnation of the oil companies. "Mr. Sherrill," he writes, "convinced me the companies have done many things that were corrupt and worse. But he fails to distinguish between crimes and other behavior that, if not altruistic, is merely a reaction to market forces." Fallows wonders whether oil companies raised prices "as an incentive for domestic production." What he suggests is that if a practice has become normal—because of the "market" or some other external pressure—the journalist should not condemn it, even if it is morally suspect. Muckrakers have never been so inhibited. They do not venerate such modern notions as "incentives." They expose what is morally wrong, regardless of its legality. One of the biggest stories a journalist could take on, yet one that would be ruled out by Fallows's distinction, is exactly how the market can be used by monopolistic companies to obtain what would be unseemly if taken directly. For example, it is perfectly proper for oil companies to buy up small companies in the solar energy field and keep their products off the market where they would compete with petroleum.

Still, Fallows's treatment of Sherrill was gentle compared with that received by Elizabeth Drew at the hands of Robert Samuelson, an economics writer for *National Journal*. Drew is in many ways the exact opposite of Sherrill: respectful, balanced, polite. A few years ago she seemed the very model of a Washington insider journalist. Yet Drew is far too idealistic for Reagan's capital, and in recent years, especially in her book *Politics and Money*, she has sounded like an old-fashioned populist, warning against the pollution of the political process by political action committees. Her book is somewhat boring and unimaginative, but it is difficult to argue that the substantial increase in corporate funding of elections is not a "story."

Writing in *The New Republic*, Samuelson vehemently attacked Drew. "This book," he wrote, "is less reportage (though it involved considerable interviewing) than polemic. It lacks any balanced view of the influences that move legislation." Reporters, in Samuelson's view, are supposed to present all sides in a controversy, carefully drawing distinctions and maintaining objectivity. If that is the criterion of good journalism, it is certainly not the main one. Since the popular press began, in Jacksonian America, partisanship, controversy and emotion have been at the heart of the journalistic endeavor—one reason, I suspect, quite a few bright people prefer a career in journalism rather than one in academia.

But even if we accept such a journalistic code of ethics,

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Samuelson himself is among the first to violate it. The attack on Drew shows him to be a master of the polemic art. One of his major complaints is that Drew does not consider academic research on campaign finance which, in general, holds that there are few abuses. Yet quite a few academic political scientists are adept at favoring specific public policies under the guise of neutrality. In 1950, the American Political Science Association published a book called *Toward a More Responsible Party System*, urging a British-type electoral system. Its members have been atoning for that youthful sin of direct advocacy ever since. They write books arguing that reform is worse than existing abuses, that politicians know what they are doing and should not be curbed, that what people think of as flaws in the party system are actually its strengths. It would be irresponsible and shoddy for a journalist to cite such literature as if it were the ultimate authority.

Like most others, journalists want to look smart and sophisticated. Confronted with reporters like Sherrill and Drew, and a tacky insistence on ethical purity and old-fashioned morality, they can barely control their contempt. To them investigative journalism was a passing fad. Now is the time for tough-minded realists to tell the public that the world of power is rough and unpretty, and to dispel popular illusions that it ever was or could ever be any other way.

The attitude that investigative reporting is outmoded reflects the fact that journalism is subject to the dictates of fashion. Timothy Crouse, author of *The Boys on the Bus*, once compared reporters to pigeons sitting on a high wire: when one flies off, they all fly off. No reader of American books and magazines can help but notice the irony that a society that values freedom of the press so highly—and is so quick to condemn its absence in other countries—expects its reporters, commentators and authors to speak in nearly identical voices. We turn out journalists like we do dishwashers: not only is their creative life short, but one could be replaced by another and few would notice the difference. Consider *The MacNeil/Lehrer Newshour*, supposed to be a serious program. Every night it follows the same formula. The interviewees all sound the same, as if they had the same scriptwriter. If *MacNeil/Lehrer* exemplifies the American free press, then the American press is not free, certainly not in any intellectual or playful sense.

The lack of government censorship in the United States compared with that in other countries may be one cause of the faddism that dominates American journalism. Reporters and editors find it tiring and unrewarding to be in opposition all the time, so a natural affinity develops between those who disseminate the news and those who make it. Where the government controls the press, no one expects anything but the party line. In America the news is as unregulated as any commodity, yet in the clubby atmosphere of an imperial capital, dissent and controversy are suspect. Traditionally, the tension in America between the press's legal right to publish the facts and the government's demand

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that it conform to the official line has been resolved by the press through self-regulation. The newspaper editors who vehemently protested Reagan's news blackout during the Grenada invasion did so on the ground that they could do a better job of telling the people what they should be told; journalists act and think alike in order to insure that no "irresponsibles" be entrusted with such delicate missions.

The decline of interest in investigative journalism and the occasional downright hostility toward it by many in the profession reflect a code of journalistic behavior that distinguishes the acceptable from the cantankerous. Much of what journalists write seems an effort to emphasize one's respectability. Here are some examples of the signals currently in vogue:

The Golden Middle. It is *de rigueur* for the hip journalist to find the preferred course of action on any conceivable issue squarely between equally fallacious right and left alternatives. The new ideology, in short, is anti-ideological.

Should we worry more about the Soviet threat or about how the Reagan Administration is meeting it? Here is Charles Morris writing in *Times of Passion*, his recently published history of America between 1960 and 1980: "Given the great imponderables of military strategy, the dogmatic sloganeering of both the left and the right holds unparalleled dangers. The reflex of the right is simply to step up American arms production until the Soviet Union is forced to bow to the sheer power of the American economy, and, in effect, drop out of the arms race. . . . At the same time, the new Soviet threat is far too dangerous simply to ignore, as the left would seem to prefer."

One can almost hear Morris saying those words at a Manhattan dinner party, while the assembled guests nod in appreciation of his moderation and sweet reason. Who could possibly disagree? Unfortunately, what might sound sensible on first hearing could be poor policy. Morris's analysis bears little relation to what the Soviet Union or the United States are actually doing, just as the critiques of Sherrill's book have little to do with what oil companies actually do. Both assume that dogma always inhabits the extremes, never the center; that left and right have equal potential to create damage; and that all those on each pole think alike. Ironically, if Morris were to put himself midway between Ronald Reagan's position on the Soviet threat and George Kennan's, he would be to the right of Richard Nixon—so much has the terrain of U.S.-Soviet relations shifted in ten years. Of course, the beauty of seeking the golden middle is that you never have to make up your mind; you can simply determine your stance by where everyone else happens to be.

Great Imponderables. Morris's view of the Soviet threat also provides an example of the second tenet of contemporary journalism. The world is so complex a person can never know the outcome of what he or she advocates; the most reasonable course, therefore, is not to advocate anything. Carried to its logical conclusion, the great imponderable means that whatever is advocated will inevitably produce the exact opposite of what is intended. Robert Samuelson said that Elizabeth Drew's analysis "aggravates the very problem the reforms purport to be curing." That kind of formulation was once the staple of neoconservatives, who loved to cite the dictum that outcome always differs from intention. But lately, with a conservative regime in power, great imponderables have become bipartisan. Liberals believed that government could make people better and it made people worse, Morris writes. Now conservatives think the free market will improve the economy, but it will not. The problem, Morris finds, lies in rationality itself, in the general belief that humans can, through conscious action, control their fate.

There is something enormously satisfying in great imponderables. Since people in power are always trying to do something, they are always subject to attack. One can always be a rebel, undermining complacency, upsetting the conventional wisdom, shaking up the status quo. Yet the other side of the analysis is that little can be changed, so one can as easily be a conservative, a skeptic and a hedger of bets. In a cynical age, skepticism seems more mature and in-

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telligent than the naïve reforms once advocated by investigative journalists.

Dismissal. Another way of ignoring a crusading journalist's message is to attack his or her lack of expertise. Generally, dismissal is practiced by reporters who have mastered an arcane field and can argue fine points of doctrine with the policy-makers in that field. When crusading journalists encroach on their territory, the reporters in residence treat them as interlopers who have nothing intelligent to say on the subject.

A blatant example of dismissal was Richard Halloran's treatment of Fred Kaplan, again in the *Times Book Review*. Halloran, a *Times* defense correspondent, was reviewing Kaplan's *The Wizards of Armageddon*, a lively, thoroughly researched and fascinating history of the men who formulate nuclear doctrine. It is a story few Americans know, and the judicious (at times maddeningly so) tone of the book should have won it a wide readership. Kaplan, however, is not a "professional," so Halloran simply refused to take him seriously.

Halloran reviewed Kaplan's book in two paragraphs at the end of a long, appreciative treatment of an otherwise forgettable book by former Defense Secretary Harold Brown. He treated Brown's conventional ideas with respect. Having held a government post, he could not be dismissed. Not so Kaplan. Halloran heaped scorn on Kaplan's book as though he was angry at having been asked to read it, dismissing the author for not writing about the Soviet side, for not citing the evidence that Halloran thought should be cited and for personalizing his treatment of the nuclear strategists. So much for the amateurs who presume to talk about matters that should be left to specialists.

Those examples indicate that just as the United States experiences cycles of passion and indifference, journalism goes through binges of investigative frenzy to be followed by self-satisfaction and complacency. Still, for all the rewards that flow to those who appear safe and respectable, something escapes the journalist who loses the investigative cutting edge. For that reason, investigative journalism, though now not as popular as it was in the heyday of "Woodstein," may someday come back into vogue. If so, it will be because America under Reagan is experiencing a return to the days when power steamrollered its opposition. We inhabit a Brechtian world, where respectable people join with criminals to grab what they can. There are, at this moment, countless stories taking shape that will be exposed by the next generation of investigative reporters. Before they come on the scene, let's give credit to some who have not joined the faddish quest for tough-minded realism and have retained their belief that the powerful should be subject to constraints of law, morality and ethics:

§ The Center for Investigative Reporting in San Francisco. It has kept up a stream of investigations, particularly into chemicals and pesticides. It recently published a book titled *Raising Hell: How the Center for Investigative Reporting Gets the Story.*

§ *The Village Voice*, more properly, the writers for *The Village Voice*. Jack Newfield and Alexander Cockburn once had a big fight over anti-Semitism. I wanted to write and tell them to drop it; their time would be better spent fighting for a more honest America. Newfield has published *The Education of Jack Newfield*; Cockburn now writes for *The Nation*. Also, *The Voice* is the only newspaper in New York City that covers local news in depth, thanks to the efforts of Wayne Barrett and Joe Conason.

§ The Fund for Investigative Journalism. Howard Bray, executive director, has helped finance investigative reporters, enabling some of them to publish in *The Nation*.

§ *Mother Jones*. Users of Ford Pintos, Dalkon Shields and other dangerous products can thank it.

§ Seymour Hersh. A one-man investigative-reporting industry, Hersh will be remembered as a bigger man than his subjects.

I have, no doubt, slighted some other reporters who are keeping investigative journalism alive until it becomes popular again. But my intention was to be suggestive, not exhaustive. All professionals are tempted by fads; this country loses most when journalists give in to the temptation. In *Straight Stuff*, James Deakin, a reporter of the old school, recently reminded us of how clubby Washington correspondents like to be with the man who lives in the White House. So long as that remains the case, independent investigative journalists will never lack a subject, even if at times they lack the audience and the attention their work deserves. □

Books Mentioned in This Article

STRAIGHT STUFF: The Reporters, the White House and the Truth. *By James Deakin. William Morrow. 378 pp. $17.95.*

POLITICS AND MONEY: The New Road to Corruption. *By Elizabeth Drew. Macmillan. 166 pp. $11.95.*

THE WIZARDS OF ARMAGEDDON. *By Fred Kaplan. Simon & Schuster. 452 pp. $18.95.*

THE CONFIDENCE GAP: Business, Labor and Government in the Public Mind. *By Seymour Martin Lipset and William Schneider. The Free Press/Macmillan. 434 pp. $19.95.*

TIMES OF PASSION: America, 1960–1980. *By Charles Morris. Harper & Row. 262 pp. $17.50.*

THE EDUCATION OF JACK NEWFIELD. *By Jack Newfield. St. Martin's Press. 192 pp. $12.95.*

THE OIL FOLLIES OF 1970–1980: How the Petroleum Industry Stole the Show (and Much More Besides). *By Robert Sherrill. Anchor Press/Doubleday. 590 pp. $19.95.*

RAISING HELL: How the Center for Investigative Reporting Gets the Story. *By David Weir and Dan Noyes. Addison-Wesley. 340 pp. $12.95.*

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

Marriage Victorian-Style

ELAINE SHOWALTER

THE BOURGEOIS EXPERIENCE: VICTORIA TO FREUD. VOLUME I: Education of the Senses. *By Peter Gay. Oxford University Press. 534 pp. $25.*

"How beastly the bourgeois is/especially the male of the species—/Nicely groomed like a mushroom." That is D.H. Lawrence on the fungoid tribe of sleek, respectable hypocrites who had banned his work and closed their minds to his sexual prophecies. For most historians, the Victorian middle class has been a byword for that kind of life-denying beastliness, for impotent husbands, repressed homosexuals and, above all, frigid wives. Steven Marcus's *The Other Victorians* changed that image to some degree, but mainly added another kind of male beastliness to it—an ugly subterranean culture of pornographers, sexual neurotics and brothel-goers.

Peter Gay's *Education of the Senses*, the first volume of a projected five-volume opus, aims to replace the clichéd view of bourgeois experience with a much more complex and positive view of the sexual conflicts, ambivalences and paradoxes of the period. Gay argues that far from being the enemies of sexual passion, the married bourgeoisie in nineteenth-century Europe and America was the first social group to enjoy it fully, thanks to the ideology of romantic love (coming up in the next installment) and the material privileges of health, cleanliness, leisure, comfort and privacy. In making his case, Gay has assembled immense amounts of fascinating evidence, much of it new, drawing on archives, letters, diaries and published sources from the United States, Germany, France, Sweden and England (roughly in that order). All sorts of witnesses from the ranks of the bourgeoisie are called to give testimony—often eloquent and tender, sometimes shocking or grotesque—to the range of sexual possibilities, the depth of sexual fantasies, that the age allowed. Gay blazes a vivid narrative trail through all the data, never losing momentum when he detours to investigate such details of the bourgeois experience as childbirth, breast-feeding, contraception, bowdlerization, the nude in art, women's education, railroads, misogyny, the sensuality of furniture and domestic objects and, most brilliantly, the diary as fortification and confessional of the self.

For Gay, female sexuality is central to an understanding of the period. In the past decade, there has been considerable controversy among feminist and social historians about the sexuality of nineteenth-century women. Feminist historians, most notably Nancy Cott and Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, have argued that there were advantages for women in supporting a cultural belief in female sexual "passionlessness," whether because it affirmed women's moral superiority to carnal males or because it fostered intimate relationships between women which were emotionally richer than those between women and men. Gay, however, follows Carl Degler in arguing that women's heterosexual passions were not really denied or repressed and that female sexual gratification within marriage was more widespread than we have hitherto believed.

To bring his argument to life, Gay quotes extensively from the uninhibited and copious diaries of Mabel Loomis Todd, begun in 1871, when she was fifteen, and continuing into the twentieth century. Todd was a genteel but ardent woman who recorded her sexual feelings before, during and outside her marriage to astronomer David Peck Todd, and throughout her prolonged and apparently socially accepted love affair with Emily Dickinson's brother Austin. Todd's exhaustive record of her erotic life not only rhapsodizes over marital bliss but also employs symbols to enumerate her orgasms, to record her menstrual periods and (possibly) to keep track of her own and her husband's masturbation. Her love letters to Dickinson, recently collected by Polly Longsworth in *Austin and Mabel: The Amherst Affair and Love Letters of Austin Dickinson and Mabel Loomis Todd*, display the same tireless romantic energy.

How representative of nineteenth-century middle-class women was this ecstatic experience? While Gay admits that Todd's sexual history was not "in any way commonplace," he maintains that she "spoke for a substantial population of married middle-class women. What was rare about her meticulous documentation was not her experience but her eloquence." Among the fragments of supporting evidence Gay presents is a survey taken by Dr. Clelia Duel Mosher in 1892, investigating the sexual behavior and feelings of forty-five married American women. Stressing that about 75 percent of the respondents reported that they had experienced orgasm, Gay concludes that the survey shows "persuasively . . . that many educated bourgeois women in the nineteenth century valued—some even craved—a sexual commerce that brought an equal measure of gratification to both partners."

That women in the nineteenth century had sexual desires seems undeniable, and one can only rejoice to know that some women were successful in realizing them. But the sweeping conclusions that Gay draws from his material raise many questions. Can American witnesses be made to speak for the bourgeois experience in Europe? Are there no cultural differences between the sexual attitudes of different societies? Were attitudes toward female sexuality changing after 1870? Did proscriptions of premarital sexual indulgence and the often difficult experience of pregnancy and childbirth affect the free expression and enjoyment of women's heterosexual yearnings? What about Victorians like the novelist Mary Austin, who recalled in the 1920s that her generation of educated women had been taught that "sexual desire was something to which God in his inscrutable wisdom had sacrificed all women"? Nobody, she insisted, had suggested that "women are passionately endowed even as men are, not good women!" Degler and Gay have proved that there were indeed some Victorians who made that suggestion; but even our own generation has problems with sexuality—despite Freud, Kinsey, Masters and Johnson and Shere Hite—and it is hard to believe that the Victorians would have done better with so many

Elaine Showalter teaches English at Rutgers University. She is the author of A Literature of Their Own *(Princeton University Press) and is working on a book about women, madness and English culture.*

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strikes against them. Gay's Freudian analysis of his cases uncovers fantasies, but it often neglects realities and circumstances that suggest a more limited thesis than his.

First of all, we should note that his major evidence comes from American women. In his introduction, Gay acknowledges that Americans occupy a "privileged though not a disproportionate place" in his study. He attributes their prominence to the greater accessibility and openness of American sources: Americans disclosed more about their private lives than Europeans, were more daring, explicit and revealing in their sexual self-portraits. Nonetheless, he insists, the voluble Americans can be taken to represent the hidden feelings of the more reticent Europeans; nineteenth-century America is a sexual avant-garde that indicates what "nineteenth-century Europe, more or less, must become."

There is a lot of leeway in that "more or less," and it seems to me that the question of cross-cultural differences is begged throughout the book. There is good reason to suppose that American attitudes toward sex were significantly different from those in Europe and that they became even more different as the century progressed. The majority of women in the Mosher survey, for example, were college educated; many had supported themselves before marriage. They came from a generation of women who had broken away from the home; their counterparts in England were significantly fewer in number and had been educated in smaller, weaker and less female-centered institutions. The sexually assertive middle-class woman may well have been the product of the specific radicalism of American women's culture.

Similarly, the evidence for female sexual self-awareness comes from the end of the nineteenth century, and especially from the 1880s and 1890s. Feminist historians have noted that after 1870, there was much more acceptance of the legitimacy of female sexual drives in America, especially among the radicals in the women's movement. In England, such developments were both later and more tentative. The Men and Women's Club, organized in 1885 to discuss the relations between the sexes, was led by a small group of left-wing intellectuals, including Olive Schreiner, whose recognition of female sexual desire was still far from untroubled.

Several elements of Mabel Loomis Todd's history also deserve more investigation. Gay takes as his model Freud's classic case studies, and in placing Todd within nineteenth-century culture he views her erotic life as the result of Oedipal drives—Austin Dickinson was exactly the same age as her adored father—and sees her theatricality and imagination as a form of hysteria. In labeling Todd a hysteric, Gay participates in what Foucault terms the "hysterization" of women—that is, the reduction of female experience to its sexual and bodily manifestations, the exclusive identification of women with their sexuality.

Feminist readers might note instead that Todd's early married life, apart from her sexual gratifications, was dull, limited and conventional—hardly a fit arena for a woman of her intelligence and (to judge by her accomplishments as an artist, musician and prolific writer) talent. An Amherst faculty wife of the 1880s, she presided over teas for Smith girls, sang on Sundays at the

BRAIDING RUGS

Neighbor,
if you want to see art,
look down at the rug

you're standing on. Those
braids wound around my arms
and through the house,

oh, up and down the stairs
so many winter nights,
Elsie perched on

the edge of her chair
piecing together scraps
of wool. Remember that

bright red coat of yours?
Every morning we stood
at the window and watched

you dash off to school
through the snow. Later,
you placed the coat in

Elsie's basket and soon
her hands flittered
across the cloth,

tugging at the hem.
Her scissors opened,
glided up the sleeves,

the lining spilling out,
bright as the monarch
butterflies that streamed

through town each fall,
circling your maple,
dipping and lighting,

taking off, then landing
again, hanging upside
down at dusk, wings open—

the tree, the sun,
the same—wings closed—
their scales the soft

underside of leaves
swaying while the porch
swing rocked back and forth.

In the morning they vanished,
one by one, with the first
sign of light, but you

were up, ready with jar
and net for the few fallen
to the ground, too weak

to make the journey South.
Pinched between our fingers,
we took them in for your

collection, and I showed you
how to keep the wings even,
the antennae straight,

to slip the pin in
just beneath the vein.
Elsie studied the field guide

and read of flight patterns,
routes, overwintering sites,
the way the butterflies

form dense clusters on
cool nights (and her braids
began to close round,

pull tight), as I sat in
silence and your head bent
low over the specimen.

Now the maple is turning
again, and you come back
to tell us of groves

in Mexico where monarchs
roost in numbers so thick
the farmers feed the fallen

ones to cows, to show us
photographs of a pupa
curling up, curling in,

wings forming, pushing
out against a coat of
its own thin membranes.

Mary Swander

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Congregational Church, chaperoned fraternity dances and volunteered in an assortment of ladies' activities. How else but in a grand passion was this New England Emma Bovary to occupy her energies? Maternity, which filled many women's lives, was not for her. While carrying her only child, Mabel refused to admit she was pregnant for several months, and (as Longworth reveals) she later let her parents take care of the child for long periods of time. Her vocation, she insisted, was as wife rather than as mother. Her continuing sexual exuberance seemed to depend as much on limited fertility as on natural capacity.

The pattern is quite different for many other American women of the same period from whom we have testimony; there we find, not surprisingly, that female sexual desire was overshadowed by the pains and responsibilities of maternity. In a number of places, Gay leaves off where he might have gone on to show how women's initial happy discovery of their sexuality within marriage was blighted by repeated pregnancy. Calvin and Harriet Beecher Stowe, for example, had years of conflict over his sexual needs and her debilitating series of pregnancies and miscarriages. Although as a bride she had felt passionate love for her husband, Stowe confessed after a decade that "I do not love and never can love with the blind unwise love with which I married." And while Elizabeth Cady Stanton (mother of seven) and other American suffragists of the *fin-de-siècle* defended the healthy naturalness of female desire, they also emphasized the woman's need and right to limit sexual expression within marriage.

Gay's view of the Mosher survey is extremely optimistic. As the historian Rosalind Rosenberg has explained in her book *Beyond Separate Spheres: Intellectual Roots of Modern Feminism*, most of Mosher's respondents indicated that fear of pregnancy interfered so much with their pleasure in marital sex that despite the high rate of orgasm, they wished intercourse took place less frequently. Temperance and moderation were repeatedly cited as sexual ideals; the average preferred rate of intercourse was about once a month. If contraception and improved obstetrical techniques removed some of the anxieties by the 1890s, it was still several decades before they effected a real change in women's attitudes.

Men's attitudes toward the presumed sexlessness of women changed as well, however, Gay argues, and one of the most important and probably most controversial contributions of this study is its richly nuanced demolition of the myth of the beastly Victorian male, the confident seducer, the insensitive lover, the indifferent father. Victorian patriarchs emerge from this volume in a new light: confused and uncertain in their first sexual encounters, affectionate, considerate and involved in their role as husbands, deeply attached to their children. One wonders who was going to those brothels. Although it is a subsequent volume, to be titled *The Tender Passion*, that will deal with Victorian love, the men of this volume are loving and lovable—so much so that recent feminist theories which posit a more intensely emotional *female* world of love and ritual outside of marriage will have to be re-examined. Despite my reservations about some of its conclusions, *Education of the Senses* is a major work of cultural history, monumental in its ambitions, immensely readable, powerfully humane. It is sure to change the way we think about our present as well as our past. □

Our Russian Poets—And Theirs

PAUL SCHMIDT

If all the satellites the United States and the Soviet Union have launched over each other for the last three decades were so many tiny mirrors spinning above our heads, and the momentary reflections we glimpsed as they passed were all we could see of each other, I doubt our views would be any more distorted or fragmented than they are now. Americans know extraordinarily little about our major obsession, and what little we know is highly selected and programmed. The conventional wisdom here is that "they" can know little or nothing about the rest of the world, cut off as they are by an iron censorship, while we are free to know whatever we want—except for what "their system" refuses to let us know. But this wisdom assumes a reciprocal interest that often simply isn't there. Even a brief comparison of Soviet and American television suggests that they are somewhat curious about us, while we are clearly less interested in them than we are in soap and extraterrestrials. In matters of literature there are enormous gaps in our knowledge. Educated Russians I have spoken to seem much better read in American literature of the last sixty years than their counterparts do in Russian literature of the same period.

Poetry, as always, is a special case. I am at present editing an anthology of twentieth-century Russian poetry in translation, and I am struck by what has and what hasn't been translated over the years, by the view of Russian poetry that seems to have conditioned those translations, and by some facts about our own poetry that seem to be part of that view. A number of very good Russian poets we simply don't read; I'd like to consider here some of the reasons why.

The prevailing American view was put succinctly by a recent review in *The New York Times*, which spoke of "the four great Russian poets of the century: Mandelstam, Pasternak, Akhmatova, Tsvetaeva." But what other Russian poets of the century do American readers know in any depth? Perhaps Brodsky (a special case, since he lives here), Voznesensky, Yevtushenko—three names from a more recent generation. Yet this was an astonishing century for Russian poetry. Where are the names of Mayakovsky, Khlebnikov, Esenin? Where are Aseyev and Kliuyev? Where is Zabolotsky? Where are Vinokurov and Slutsky? Where are Akhmadulina, Sosnora and Kushner? The adjective "great" belongs just as surely to Mayakovsky and Khlebnikov, or to Esenin, as it does to the four mentioned in *The Times*. Why then these four and not the others?

Much has to do with the presence of Russian émigrés as a filter; many of our evaluations are simply theirs. We know the work of Pasternak, Mandelstam and Akhmatova more thoroughly in America because of careful editions published in the emigration by Gleb Struve and Boris Filipoff, who edited a three-volume collected Pasternak in

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1961, a three-volume collected Mandelstam in 1969, and a two-volume collected Akhmatova in 1968. But the Pasternak edition was preceded by the publication of *Doctor Zhivago* and Pasternak's refusal of the Nobel Prize in 1958, and it was the political significance of those events that insured subsequent American translations of this difficult poet. Similarly it was the publication in the West in 1970 of Nadezhda Mandelstam's memoir *Hope Against Hope* that stimulated the subsequent appearance of several volumes of English translations of Mandelstam. News of the persecution of Akhmatova had become common knowledge abroad by the early 1960s, and Americans kept pace with translations of her work. Tsvetaeva, less obviously a political victim and a less accessible poet, has had to wait longer for Alexander Sumerkin's careful émigré edition and for widespread translation.

It seems clear now, twenty-five years after the publication of *Doctor Zhivago*, that apart from the excellence of their poetry, these four fit a pattern that Americans find attractive in Russian poets: they had all achieved recognition before the revolution, but they did not subsequently embrace it and become "Soviet" poets. Rather, their poetry remained private, and as a result they were all in some measure victims of Soviet persecution.

There are two questions to be asked. Would we have been as welcoming to those poets if they had not been victims? And (a perverse question perhaps, but one that follows from the first) would their poetry have been as good if they had not been persecuted? There is in America an ongoing fascination with art as a response to social catastrophe, because it has not been part of the fabric of our lives and our artists have not had to respond to it. Mandelstam said that "great poetry is often a response to total disaster." But disasters can be of different orders. For Americans disaster is a private thing, and so is poetry. We love our poets of private calamity; we read Sylvia Plath with an avidity which the mere excellence of her verse does not explain. But the Soviet disaster we are concerned with—political persecution of poets, harassment, arrest, imprisonment, even death—is inconceivable in American terms. Poetry for us is a personal matter; each of our poets speaks his or her own language. Can we really conceive of martyrdom because of being a poet? To

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be a martyr is to say that if I perish, communality is strengthened and I lose nothing but my life. It is to have a sense of common cause stronger than any individual desire. But to perish when you are the only one who speaks your language is to lose all.

I take that notion to be central to our contemporary interest in Russian poetry—more precisely, in persecuted Russian poets. Whatever Orthodox Christian ideas about the sanctity of the Word may have remained alive in Russia all this time, language has had a power there it has not had here. And surely writers elsewhere must envy the exaltation of the poet's calling in the Soviet Union. What bitterness do our poets experience, whose nonbeing in America, whose isolation in American life, is so overwhelming? And is there not perhaps a fascination with the sufferings of those who speak out *and are listened to*, an intense longing to be taken so seriously whatever the cost, a wild envy of a culture where the Word is a matter of life and death?

Perhaps we can understand more about the matter by examining the reputations here of Mayakovsky, Esenin and Khlebnikov, equally good poets and members of the same generation as the first four. Why have they not been extensively translated here in America? Why do we not celebrate them as "great"? One difference is clear: these three were all, to some extent, Soviet poets. Although they too had achieved recognition before the revolution, they acclaimed it when it came and worked at making themselves into Soviet poets, praisers of the new order. Nor were they obvious victims of Soviet persecutions; rather the opposite, at least for Mayakovsky, who was canonized and made into an official poet. More than anything, I think, this canonization is a reason for the disdain with which émigrés have always treated him. In the Soviet Union, the distinction between what is officially sanctioned literature and what is not is quite physical: Mayakovsky's canonization meant that his every word and his image have been inflated and plastered everywhere to the point of making you sick, while the poems of Mandelstam, for instance, circulating for so long in *samizdat* or by word of mouth, became, by that very fact, passionately interesting. A distinction like that—far greater than that between, say, the flimsiest of small-press publications and the complete works of Robert Frost in hardcover—is lost on us here. Any Russian opposed to the Soviet establishment will automatically reject Mayakovsky and sometimes even Esenin as part of it, and that opinion, carried by the emigration, has been passed on to us. (The case of Khlebnikov is different; he has been generally less read because of the supposed complexity of his work.)

True, there are also specific literary reasons for the differing reputations of these poets in America. The poems of Mandelstam, Pasternak, Akhmatova and Tsvetaeva are easily recognized here as poems. Their modernist lyrics were part of the same European tradition as the work of their American contemporaries. No matter how hard it was to translate them, the results fit our accepted definitions of what a poem was. Their voices found echoes among poets' voices here. The work of Mayakovsky, Khlebnikov and Esenin is fundamentally rooted in the Russianness of the Russian language; it does not always belong to the internationalist tradition of the other four. Compare this stanza from Mandelstam:

> After tea we came out into the great
> brown garden,
> Dark blinds lowered like eyelids on the
> windows,
> Past white columns we went to see the
> grapes
> Where sleepy mountains are suffused
> with airy glass.
> ("Tristia," no. 92)

with this from Mayakovsky:

> My poems will crash
> through Time's attempts to
> obstruct
> them and turn up huge
> and rough
> and crude,
> their unmistakable lines
> like slave-built aqueducts
> that still pour water
> into thirsty Rome.
> ("At the Top of My Voice")

or this from Khlebnikov:

> I tell you the Universe is the scratch
> of a match on the face of the calculus,
> and my thoughts are a lock pick at
> work
> on a door, and behind it someone is
> dying . . .
> ("The Tables of Destiny")

Mayakovsky and Khlebnikov were astonishing innovators, not only of the forms of poetry, but of the poet's role in society. Their work was so radically new, or in the case of Esenin so local, that they did not fit well into the patterns of American poetry—especially

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the patterns of the American critical establishment that controls the business of translation. Translating these poets is thus enormously more difficult than translating the first four. But it is remarkable, I think, to consider the list of first-rate American poets—none of whom knows Russian, and who were therefore all persuaded to the task by people who did—who have done translations of Mandelstam, Pasternak, Akhmatova, Voznesensky and Yevtushenko. Why were none of them ever persuaded to translate Mayakovsky or Khlebnikov or Esenin? Those are stranger, more difficult, more Russian voices—why was this not therefore seen as a greater challenge? One is left with the suspicion that despite the literary problems involved, we ignore those three partly because of political attitudes, transmitted through the emigration but congenial to our own bias: these poets were not victims of official Soviet persecution, and so they are of less interest to us.

Yet we might have expected these three poets to be all the more attractive to American readers because of their personal histories. They had, after all, been broken by private disaster: Khlebnikov died of disease and malnutrition, Mayakovsky and Esenin died young by their own hands. The Romantic image of the tormented lyricist might well have gained them great reputation here. But the fact is that despite their private disasters they had all been trying to achieve a poetry that celebrates the commonweal, a poetry of a land and its people. They wrote with a sense of history, and that makes American poets uneasy. We have no meters in our poetry, we have no real sense of Time. Our poems sometimes sprawl, as if to cover all the empty space. We have no poetry that links past and place, or that links an individual with what comes before him or after. History is absent from our poetry, and we laugh at "Hiawatha." The fact is that a great deal of Russian poetry attempts to do what our great forebear Walt Whitman set out to do: celebrate the body politic. Why should those attempts remain foreign to us?

Another distortion in our view of Russian poetry seems linked to the same causes. Few Americans are aware of the role that the Second World War plays in the Russian imagination. We have practically no translations of Russian war poetry. Whatever its merit—and some of it is very good and genuinely patriotic—to neglect it is not to understand a profound Russian experience, a fact of history upon which popular Russian feeling and Soviet government policy coincide absolutely. We have no comparable poems—but surely those are precisely the poems we should try to translate, to understand what kinds of tasks Russian poets set themselves and how they have tried to solve them. We cannot deny the perversion of those tasks by the Soviet authorities, the falseness and corruption of what happened under Stalin and has happened ever since, nor the courage of those Russians who struggled against that corruption. But the tasks themselves are admirable.

Where are Americans to look for models of what we so desperately need: a sense of community, the engagement of the self in the social order? Our poetic establishment is largely academic and elitist; its poetry deals still in late Romantic self-explorations. The relation of the self to the community and to political and social engagement is not yet an acceptable mode; where it occurs, say in Adrienne Rich or Allen Ginsberg, it is accorded an uneasy critical reception. Now even our novels are turning inward—as our plays have long done—and personal identity goes no further than the extent of relations within the nuclear family. Is there any way for American writers to test their courage in public situations? Victor Nekrassov, a Russian émigré, has said, "The real problem is that now I write, and I don't risk anything. So what I'm missing in the West is knowing that I'm courageous."

That lack of engagement is the overwhelming problem any artist in America faces, and it is surely the reason Russian poets fascinate us. But it may be that true courage in America would require trying to write like Mayakovsky instead of like Mandelstam. Our desperate need is for poets who speak—or will try to create—a public language, not a private one. In Russia, poets have always spoken as prophets, spoken *for* the people who spoke the language. That at least is what some of the poets claimed, and the majority of Russians have believed them. Whether they were idolized or persecuted, monumentalized or shot, they were never left alone. It is the aloneness of American poets that is their curse—*Alone with America* is the perfect title of Richard Howard's study of American poetry—so to look from America to Russia is surely to perceive a different order of things where words

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are concerned. In America we have learned to make poetry from emptiness and from isolation. Our critics speak always of a poet's need "to find his voice." It is just that—each American poet must remake language to fit him- or herself. But most Russian poets speak the language of the tribe. They set themselves a task different from ours—not to find a private voice, but to speak the common language with more perfect pitch. Perhaps we envy them that. Perhaps we should begin to imitate them in that. □

Sex, Politics, Vegetables

CAROL STERNHELL

FLY AWAY HOME. *By Marge Piercy. Summit. 446 pp. $16.95.*

I am probably Marge Piercy's ideal reader. I save old buttons and posters ("Impeach Nixon," framed in red, hangs over my stove), listen to Holly Near while getting dressed ("It Could Have Been Me" brings tears to my eyes every time), prefer John Sayles to Woody Allen (or Fellini) and have always enjoyed messages with my media. If Piercy wears her political heart on her sleeve, I think it looks fine there, embroidered on faded denim; if she's sometimes appallingly sentimental—well, I miss the sixties too.

I offer these remarks as something of a warning, because I loved *Fly Away Home*. I loved it knowing it was predictable, improbable, often contrived and not especially well written. (Indeed, some sentences are truly awful: "Her doubt spread out its fine threads like the mycelium of a toadstool under the ground, wanting only stimulation to sprout in a new place.") I read Piercy the way some people read Judith Krantz or Danielle Steel—for adventure, mystery, sex and glamour, although here it's of a counterculture sort: instead of flying off to Paris or the Caribbean, Piercy's heroine finds her roots (and hotter sex) in an interracial, working-class, communal household.

A few years ago, in a poem called "My mother's novel," Piercy said of herself:

> I am her only novel.
> The plot is melodramatic,
> hot lovers leap out of
> thickets, it makes you cry
> a lot, in between the revolutionary
> heroics and making good
> home-cooked soup.

I can't imagine a better description of *Fly Away Home*, the absorbing story of a conventional suburban woman's personal and political awakening, a consciousness-raising thriller replete not only with soup but with fresh coffee, "prebuttered slices of cranberry-apricot-orange bread" and lots of vegetables. Daria Walker, a cookbook writer successful enough to have her own TV show but so naïve (or feminine) that she doesn't have the slightest idea how much money she earns or how her lawyer husband Ross really makes a living, suspects that something is wrong with her marriage when Ross moves out of their bedroom and begins receiving mysterious notes from someone named Lou. When she notices picketers outside Ross's office carrying signs reading "Walker's buildings are firetraps," she thinks, "Walker? That couldn't have anything to do with her. Walker was a common name." When a foul package arrives at their beautiful Massachusetts home, smelling "like something dead," she accepts Ross's assurance that it's merely cheese sent by a grateful client, though she has "the ridiculous feeling that he was lying." By the time a small band of picketers, members of an Allston tenants group called SON (for Save Our Neighborhood), appears at her doorstep, it's clear to the reader, if not to Daria, that Ross is a particularly vicious slumlord who doesn't mind resorting to arson when he's low on cash.

Fly Away Home becomes something of a mystery as Daria unravels Ross's affairs, both personal (he's about to leave her for Gail Abbott-Wisby, a skinny young heiress who breeds dogs and is "very, very plain") and financial (Ross's real estate deals are the most complicated element of the plot). The key to the novel's appeal isn't suspense, however: we realize almost immediately that Daria will join SON, fall in love with one of its leaders, Tom, a cuddly working-class hero, and uncover the truth about Ross. We even suspect that Ross, once he has moved out and begun very ugly divorce proceedings, will have

Carol Sternhell, a writer and critic, teaches journalism at New York University.

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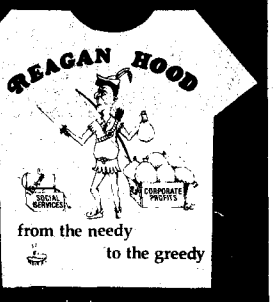

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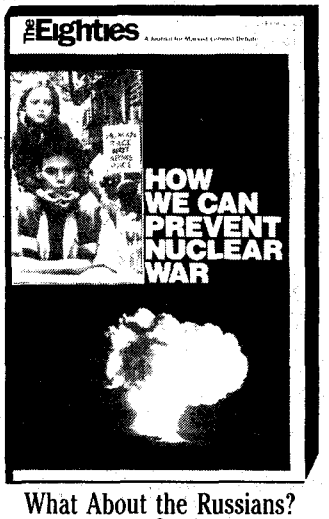

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Daria's beloved house torched.

Rather than suspense, Piercy provides reassurance. Good and evil are never blurred. Her values are explicit: real people—Daria; her younger daughter, Tracy; her Puerto Rican housemates Sandra María and 6-year-old Mariela; and Tom—like food (especially homemade from fresh ingredients), sex, natural wood floors, gardens, animals and earthy jobs (like cookbook writer and carpenter). Shallow people, like upwardly mobile Ross and their dress-for-success older daughter, Robin, turn away from both food and sex, admiring thinness, money, beige carpeting, "control." Ross refuses to make love to Daria and calls her cookbooks "fat books"; "hotly ambitious" Robin runs to an anorexic slimness: "her favorite verb for eating anything was pigging out." Tom, like Daria, is on the plump side; we first recognize his potential as a lover when he makes lunch, "a fine classic French omelette with fresh herbs he must grow inside, as she did." Daria is impressed: "How odd that Tom could cook; Ross found it exasperatingly difficult to heat a dinner she had precooked for him." Tom's elitist ex-wife, who left him because he was happy being a carpenter, "was always on a diet. After a while, whatever came up, was it going to the movies, was it fucking, was it making friends, her only interest was in how many calories it had." Needless to say, sex with nurturing Tom is better than sex with uptight Ross: "Kissing him was very different from her experience of twenty years. His lips were full, sensual, active. Ross had narrow lips and the tendency to hold them rigid when he was kissing. This was something far more sensual, more enveloping, more overwhelming."

The only problem in this rather satisfying scheme of things is Ross, who is so unrelievedly evil, so completely reprehensible, that it's difficult to understand what Daria ever saw in him. Certainly a tender father, or "an idealistic law student who was going into the government and make the system work for the disadvantaged," can become a slumlord, maybe even one who relies on arson. But when—after dropping by to remove some of their better antiques—he attempts to burn his wife to death in her bed, it's hard to believe that he has merely "changed." Like Daria, we want to understand, but revelation never comes:

> That day she realized she would never enter Ross's consciousness and understand. . . . She felt as if she had been climbing an enormous mountain for months only to find at the top not the view she had imagined but simply fog and swirling clouds and rocks beneath her feet. No long view of the terrain covered would ever open up.

Perhaps evil is its own explanation—certainly any simple answer would be facile—but Ross seems like an archetypal villain, the star of a vaudeville melodrama who has wandered by mistake into contemporary Boston. Where the other characters are solid flesh, Ross is a malevolent ghost; he exists only to represent the forces of darkness (capitalism, patriarchy, processed cheese). As Daria learns to see—to wonder, "Was innocent the opposite of guilty or the opposite of wise?"—Ross's outline blurs. She can't finally see the truth about him because he was never really there.

It's easy to be flippant about Piercy's work, and sometimes it's hard not to be, but I really did love *Fly Away Home*. I much prefer Piercy's energetic conviction—politically correct, morally uplifting, well-scrubbed—to oblique post-modernist despair or Renata Adler's snippets of sensibility; more wholesome than artful, like old quilts or homemade yogurt, Piercy wants, as she once wrote in a poem, "to be of use." It's not a very fashionable ambition, but it's one I admire. □

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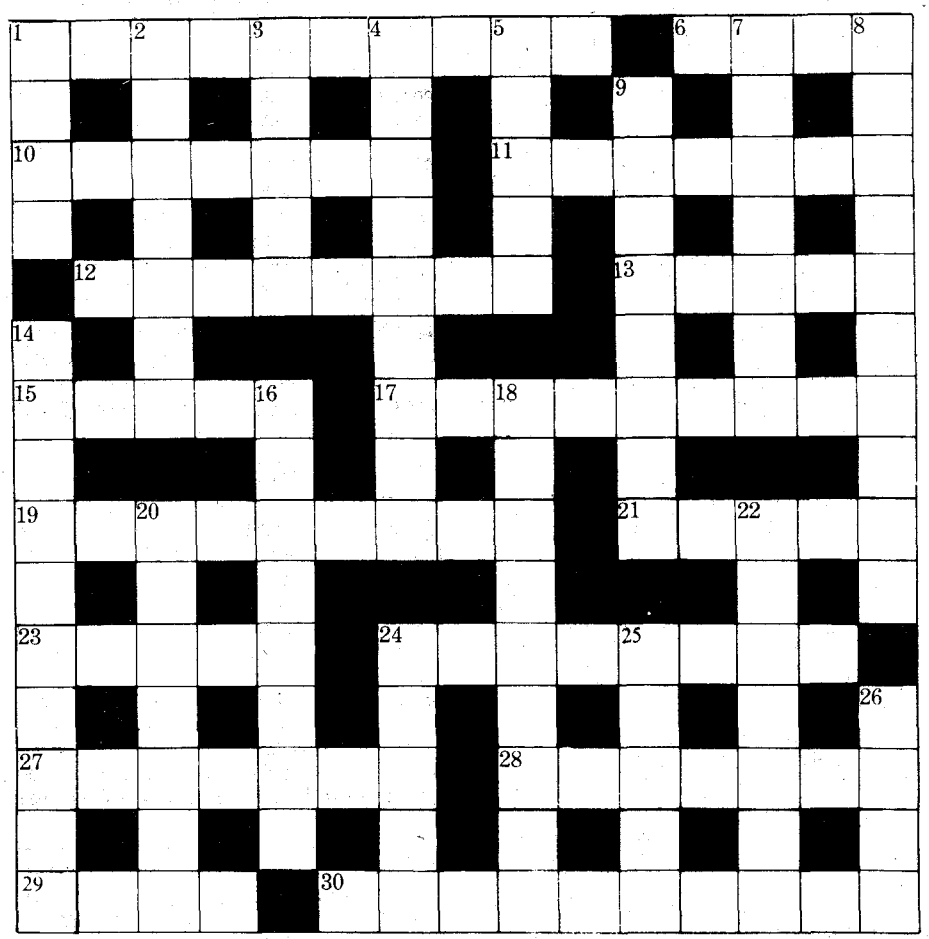
I	■	U	■	L	■	R	■	O	■	O	■	D	■	H
T	A	L	K	I	N	G	■	R	E	V	E	R	S	E
H	■	P	■	T	■	A	■	E	■	E	■	U	■	M
E	R	R	■	H	A	N	G	A	R	■	A	G	R	A
■	■	I	■	E	■	I	■	N	■	T	■	O	■	R
A	S	T	E	R	I	S	K	■	F	R	A	N	C	K
N	■	■	■	I	■	T	■	H	■	U	■	■	■	E
D	A	R	I	N	G	■	F	O	R	E	C	A	S	T
B	■	E	■	G	■	B	■	T	■	T	■	L	■	■
A	R	C	H	■	N	U	N	C	I	O	■	I	N	N
R	■	O	■	O	■	R	■	A	■	L	■	G	■	O
R	O	U	N	D	E	L	■	K	N	I	G	H	T	S
E	■	N	■	D	■	A	■	E	■	F	■	T	■	E
L	O	T	U	S	■	P	O	S	S	E	S	S	E	D

Crossword Puzzle No. 2001

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 Exceedingly precise, or on the face of things, original. (10)
6 The golden one wasn't so admired by girl-watchers. (4)
10 So little time Oliver asked for? (They might be supportive.) (7)
11 What everyone talks about then is supposedly bright blue. (7)
12 and 17 Where they measure things such as a dresser full of colors? (6,2,9)
13 Old Greek place where starving artists were supposed to hang out? (5)
15 Nothing writes like this, as "Dear Sir" does to a letter. (5)
17 See 12
19 The bird evidently isn't all backbone! (9)
21 Such an evil person spent his time the wrong way! (5)
23 and 18 down Shakespeare wasn't referring to the Stone, Iron, Bronze, etc. (5,4,2,3)
24 The rough North Sea? It doesn't belong to us! (8)
27 Polonius told us not to be one of these. (7)
28 The one that got shot up wasn't the ancient type. (7)
29 Take a pace back like some dogs, perhaps. (4)
30 Was the Wabash a fast runner? (10)

DOWN

1 Something one may try to get rid of, like a sort of 29. (4)
2 What sometimes gets attached to company names has a sort of duel with it, to contain a subordinate. (7)
3 The pound has more than one animal like this. (5)
4 Ruffled birds sure get expended! (9)
5 A jester comes up with what might be considered standoffish. (5)
7 A good judge of rarebit, possibly? (7)
8 How to predict the French part of the ship's appearance? (10)
9 The pearls, the beach and the sailor all might be. (8)
14 In difficult clues crops might be red or white. (10)
16 One you don't know is more odd? (9)
18 See 23 across
20 What they take internally at least once a year? (7)
22 It might run around part of the house, and you'll find a girl in it. (7)
24 A seat when shaky is easily lost. (2,3)
25 Get him off? Just the opposite with this bird! (5)
26 Raise money overseas to cover the seed. (4)

PUZZLED?

No more cross words. If you don't see why "Lures" are "Ground Rules," send for those of Mr. Lewis to *The Nation*, 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011.

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